Supreme Court, U.S.
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No._____

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
October Term, 1999

BRYON L. ROSQUIST, D.C., P.C.,
A UTAH CORPORATION, AND
BRYON L. ROSQUIST, INDIVIDUALLY,
Petitioners
vs.
MELANIE MCCANN, NOELE NELSON, AND
LISA NIELSON,
Respondents

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTION PRESENTED

Whether a complaint alleging nothing more than nonconsensual touching of an adult fails to allege a "crime of violence" within the civil liability provision of the Violence Against Women Act and 18 U.S.C. § 16.

Petitioners Bryon L. Rosquist, D.C., P.C., and Bryon L.Rosquist individually respectfully petition for a writ of certiorari to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in this case.

LIST OF PARTIES

The parties are as stated in the caption.

RULE 29.6 STATEMENT

There are no related parent or subsidiary companies to Bryon L. Rosquist, D.C., P.C.

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The opinion of the Tenth Circuit (App., *infra*, 1A - 17A) is reported at 185 F.3d 1113 (1999). The Tenth Circuit denied a petition for rehearing with suggestion for rehearing en banc on October 4, 1999 (App., *infra*, 18A-19A) and denied a Motion for Stay of Mandate Pending Application for a Writ of Certiorari on October 18, 1999.

The Tenth Circuit's decision reversed a decision of the district court (App., *infra*, 20A-37A), which is reported at 998 F. Supp. 1246 (D. Utah 1998).

JURISDICTION

The decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit was issued on August 3, 1999. (App., *infra*, 1A). An order denying petitioners' timely petition for rehearing with suggestion for rehearing en banc was issued on October 4, 1999 (App., *infra*, 18A), and petitioners' request for stay of mandate pending filing of petition for certiorari was denied on October 18, 1999.[1] The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C. § 1254(1).

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

The relevant portions of the following constitutional and statutory provisions are reproduced in the Appendix: U.S. Const., art. I, § 8 (Commerce Clause); U.S. Const. amend. X; 42 U.S.C. 13981(The Gender Motivated Violence Act of the Violence Against Women Act); 18 U.S.C. 16 (definition of "crime of violence"); Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404(1) (Utah's indecent liberties statute). (App., *infra*, 37A –39A).

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[1] Following the denial of that motion for stay, Petitioners/Defendants filed their Second Motion to Dismiss asking the District Court to adopt the Fourth Circuit's decision in *Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State Univ.*, 169 F.3d 820, 889 (4th Cir. 1999) (en banc) and find the VAWA unconstitutional. The Second Motion to Dismiss was filed on November 18, 1999 and is still pending.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

This petition for a writ of certiorari seeks this Court's review of the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, on the linchpin issue in determining the breadth of the Violence Against Women Act, 42 U.S.C. § 13981:[2] the scope of the phrase "crimes of violence."

A. The Complaint

Respondents Melanie McCann, Noele Nelson, and Lisa Nielson were employed in the office of petitioner Dr. Bryon L. Rosquist ("Dr. Rosquist"). After McCann and Nielson were fired, they filed a complaint in the United States District Court for the District of Utah seeking damages under eight causes of action. One cause of action, under the Violence Against Women Act, alleged various inappropriate sexual touchings by Dr. Rosquist, such as that he "touched," "fondled," "rubbed," and "stood close" to them. Interestingly, respondents also alleged that between and after these alleged acts, they continued to seek treatment from Dr. Rosquist voluntarily. Respondents' only allegation of duress of any kind was the fear of possibly losing their jobs if they complained of the alleged advances. Yet respondents did not allege that Dr. Rosquist at any time threatened them with the loss of their jobs. Seven state law causes of action sought damages for intentional infliction of emotional distress, invasion of privacy, breach of contract, and for other state law violations arising out of the same allegations.

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[2] In 1994, Congress passed the Civil Rights for Gender Motivated Violence Act (GMVA) as a subtitle to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The GMVA subtitle was styled the "Civil Rights Remedies for Gender Motivated Violence Act." P.L. 103-322, Title IV, subtitle C; 108 Stat. 1941 (1994). For simplicity, this petition will simply refer to the relevant civil suit provision as "VAWA" unless otherwise indicated.

B. The District Court's Finding of No "Crime of Violence."

The district court dismissed the complaint. Even assuming the allegations to be true,[3] the court found that the respondents had failed to allege a "crime of violence" as required by VAWA. App., *infra*, 34A. With the federal claim dismissed, the court further declined to exercise pendent jurisdiction over the remaining seven state causes of action.

The district court dismissed the VAWA claim after extended analysis of the statute, its legislative history, and interpretive case law. The court initially explained that, "as a matter of judicial restraint," it would first analyze Dr. Rosquist's nonconstitutional challenge to VAWA's application. This approach obviated the need to address the question of whether VAWA is a constitutional exercise of the powers vested in Congress to regulate interstate commerce. App. *infra*, 23A (declining to reach issue presented in *Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*, 132 F.3d 949 (4th Cir. 1997), *rev'd* 169 F.3d 820, 889 (4th Cir. 1999) (en banc), petitions for cert. granted, *United States v. Brzonkala*, No. 99-5, etc., 120 S.Ct. 11 (1999).

In order to state a cause of action under VAWA, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, a party must allege the commission of a "crime of violence motivated by gender." 42 U.S.C. § 13981(d)(2)(A)). VAWA defines "crime of violence" by cross-reference to 18 U.S.C. § 16. Surveying the relevant case law, the district court found that eleven federal cases had applied the civil suit provision of VAWA. Of these, eight allowed an action to proceed where the plaintiff alleged "rape, varying forms of criminal assault and battery, and violent physical and mental abuse." On the other hand, three cases

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[3] Because this petition arises from a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim, the allegations must be accepted as true. To be clear, however, Dr. Rosquist maintains that all the allegations in this lawsuit are, in their entirety, untrue and baseless.

found the alleged predicate crime was not a crime of violence or a felony where the plaintiff alleged "nonconsensual touching and kissing."

The district court next reviewed the legislative history bearing on a "crime of violence" in VAWA. The legislative history "discusses battered women's shelters and situations where women are subject to hitting, attack[], and otherwise fearing for their safety" (*quoting and discussing* S. REP. NO. 103-138, at 37-38)). The district court also observed that the Senate believed that "'[f]or a cause of action to arise under title III, a plaintiff must prove that the crime of violence--whether an assault, a kidnapping, or a rape--was motivated by gender'" (*quoting* S. REP. NO. 103-138, at 51). The district court concluded that the focus of VAWA was "to provide a remedy for victims of violent acts — i.e., rape, assault, kidnapping."

With this background in mind, the district court turned to determining whether the nonconsensual touching alleged in the complaint constituted a crime of violence under 18 U.S.C. § 16. Consistent with *United States v. Reyes-Castro*, 13 F.3d 377 (10th Cir. 1993), and *Taylor v. United States*, 495 U.S. 575 (1990), VAWA should be read as adopting a uniform categorical approach rather than "depend[ing] on the definition adopted by the State" defining the offense. *Taylor*, 495 U.S. at 590. Under this approach, a court must look beyond the state's mere statutory definition of the offense where the definition includes both violent and non-violent conduct. In order to effect the congressional intent to set a uniform national standard, "the technical label given by a state to a crime is not relevant to the determination of whether a given offense constitutes a 'crime of violence.'"

Although a Utah statute, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404, makes a "broad range of conduct" a felony, "not all the conduct presents a 'substantial risk that physical force against the person . . . may be used.'" (*quoting* 18 U.S.C. § 16)). The district court noted that,

after "having reviewed over 100 cases that discuss the term 'crime of violence' in a variety of contexts," that not even a single case holds that a predicate statute similar to the one at issue constitutes a per se 'crime of violence.'" App., *infra*, 33A. The conduct contained in the complaint — an alleged nonconsensual touching of the appellants — "is not of the violent nature required to state a cause of action" under VAWA. Accordingly, the district court dismissed the VAWA cause of action for failure to state a claim upon which relief could be granted and declined to exercise pendent jurisdiction over the various state claims.

C. The Tenth Circuit's Reversal

Respondents appealed to the Tenth Circuit,[4] and a panel reversed the district court's decision. The panel began its analysis by concluding that "our precedents require that the crime of violence analysis be conducted at the level of the statutory definition." App., *infra*, 5A (*citing Reyes-Castro*, 13 F.3d at 379. Under this "categorical approach," the panel examined the statute cited by appellants — Utah's "indecent liberties" statute, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404, which provides:

> A person commits forcible sexual abuse if the victim is 14 years of age or older and, under circumstances not amounting to rape, object rape, sodomy, or attempted rape or sodomy, the actor touches the anus, buttocks, or any part of the genitals of another, or touches the breast of female, or otherwise takes indecent liberties with another, or causes another to take indecent liberties with the actor or another, with intent to cause substantial emotional or bodily pain to any person or with the intent

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[4] Because of the great importance of the issues at stake in this case, the National Organization of Women Legal Defense and Education Fund, Ayuda, Inc., the Center for Women Policy Studies, Jewish Women International, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Women's Law Project, and other similar organizations all sought leave to file an out-of-time amicus brief for the Tenth Circuit. That motion was denied.

> to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, without the consent of the other, regardless of the sex of the participant.

The panel explained that a previous Tenth Circuit decision, *United States v. Reyes-Castro*, 13 F.3d 377, 379 (10th Cir. 1993), had analyzed an "analogous statutory counterpart" from Utah — sexual abuse of a child, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404.1(1). *Reyes-Castro* concluded that sexual acts upon a child were always to be deemed crimes of violence:

> Because the crime [of rape] involves a non-consensual act upon another person, there is a substantial risk that physical force may be used in the course of committing the offense. It does not matter whether physical force is actually used. Our scrutiny ends upon a finding that the risk of violence is present. . . . A common sense view of the sexual abuse statute, in combination with the legal determination that children are incapable of consent, suggests that when an older person attempts to sexually touch a child under the age of fourteen, there is always a substantial risk that physical force will be used to ensure the child's compliance.

13 F.3d at 379 (internal citations omitted).[5] Quoting this language from the earlier decision, the panel in this case concluded "[a]lthough children's lesser physical stature and general vulnerability to violence and sexual exploitation by adults may increase the risk that physical force be exerted to ensure compliance in situations of child sexual abuse, this presumption by

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[5] Although the Utah indecent liberties statute contains a label of "forcible sexual assault," it actually extends far beyond forcible activities to also embrace non-forcible conduct. App., *infra*, 10A (rejecting reliance on the label because the actual language of the statute encompasses a broad range of conduct). The Tenth Circuit recognized this fact, agreeing that it would look "to the elements of the statute, not just the fact that it is labeled 'forcible,'" to reach a decision. App., *infra*, 10A.

no means forecloses the potential that the risk of such force against adults" could be substantial. App., *infra*, 12A. Moreover, the panel argued, "[t]he very act of nonconsensual sexual contact . . . both demonstrates and creates a substantial risk of more serious physical intrusion or the application of force to ensure compliance." In its peroration, the Tenth Circuit explained its true motivation in construing the statute in this fashion:

> In enacting the VAWA, Congress recognized the degree to which our nation's systems of law enforcement and adjudication have been complicit in perpetuating the epidemic of violence against women, in part by failing to recognize crimes of gender-motivated violence as serious crimes. . . . We will not compound that failing today by restricting . . . the definition of "violence" to only those forms of violence most traditionally feared by men — murder and serious bodily injury. . . .
>
> To do otherwise would be to perpetrate, deliberately and in contravention of established precedent, the very judicial indifference to gender-based violence that Congress has endeavored to obviate.

App., *infra*, 14A-15A. Accordingly, the panel found that any act of non-consensual sexual touching between adults constituted a crime of violence for purposes of VAWA.

The panel next rejected Dr. Rosquist's argument that VAWA should be construed to avoid reaching activities outside the ambit of congressional power. Dr. Rosquist argued in support of the district court's judgment that VAWA would be outside of Congress' power to regulate interstate commerce if it were construed to cover all unwelcome sexual touchings. *Cf. Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State Univ.*, 169 F.3d 820, 889 (4th Cir. 1999) (en banc)(holding that enactment of § 13981 exceeded Congressional authority regardless of construction), petitions for cert. granted, *United States v. Brzonkala*, No. 99-5,

etc., 120 S.Ct. 11 (1999). Dr. Rosquist noted that Congress had made disputed findings on the effects on interstate commerce of acts of physical violence against women. Br. of Dr. Rosquist at 34-35 (citing S. REP. NO. 103-138 concerning violence as a leading cause of injury to women and the need for medical assistance to women who are injured). Congress, however, had made no findings that would support the conclusion that sexual touchings have any effect on interstate commerce, much less any "substantial effect" as required by this Court's opinions. *Cf. United States v. Lopez*, 514 U.S. 549, 555-57 (1995). The panel, however, rejected the argument for a narrow interpretation, concluding it was not permissible to establish such a construction "to avoid a hypothetical constitutional challenge." App., *infra*, 17A.

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE PETITION

This Court has already granted certiorari to review the question of whether Congress possessed constitutional power to create a federal cause of action for violence against women. *United States v. Brzonkala*, No. 99-5, etc., 120 S.Ct. 11 (1999). If this Court ultimately upholds the constitutionality of VAWA, this petition presents the critical follow-up question about the scope of the civil liability provision: the breadth of the phrase "crime of violence."[6]

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[6] Because this petition presents questions of the proper interpretation of VAWA, it should be held pending the disposition of the constitutional challenge in *Brzonkala*. If VAWA is struck down, this petition should be granted and the case remanded to the Tenth Circuit for dismissal. If VAWA is upheld, the Court should consider this petition at that time. Because of the relationship of this petition to *Brzonkala*, it is possible that this petition draws the constitutionality of an Act of Congress into question and that 28 U.S.C. § 2403(a) may apply. Accordingly, this brief has been served on the Solicitor General of the United States.

I. The Scope of VAWA's Civil Liability Provision is an Important Question with Substantial Implications for the Workload of the Federal Courts

How broadly the phrase "crime of violence" is interpreted in VAWA will have profound implications for the workload of the already overburdened federal trial and appellate courts. If the phrase is construed broadly, as the Tenth Circuit has done, then a vast array of issues traditionally litigated in state courts will be deflected to federal court dockets. Indeed, for this very reason, VAWA was incredibly controversial from the day it was proposed. While the Act was under consideration, Chief Justice Rehnquist urged Congress, on behalf of the federal courts, "to consider carefully the wisdom of shifting these types of disputes to federal courts." Long Range Planning for the U.S. Courts (remarks of Chief Justice Rehnquist), *reprinted in* 138 CONG. REC. E746, E747 (daily ed. Mar. 19, 1992).

Because of such concerns, Congress carefully limited the reach of the civil liability provisions of VAWA, stating in its final report on VAWA, that the "civil rights provision is *strictly limited* to felonious crimes of violence." S. REP. NO. 103-138, at 52 (emphasis added). This carefully-crafted limitation was designed to avoid undue burden on federal judges. Part of the legislative record was a detailed estimate from the Administrative Office for the U.S. Courts of the impact of VAWA's civil suits provision. The Office concluded that the cost to the federal judiciary would be $50.39 million. *See* Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Judicial Impact Statement: Violence Against Women Act, J.R. 1502, 8 (June 8, 1992). These careful calculations were based on data concerning the number of women who were "attacked by a rapist" or "beaten in their homes." *Id.* at 11. Congress recognized this limitation, stating in its final report on VAWA that "[f]or a cause of action to arise under [the civil liability provision], a plaintiff must prove that the crime of violence — whether an assault, kidnapping or a rape — was motivated by gender." S. REP. NO. 103-138, at 51. In these and other documents, Congress

evinced its concern with "the problem of violence" such as "rape, sexual assault, murder, and domestic violence," and situations where "women are subject to hitting, attacking, and otherwise fearing for their safety." App., *infra*, 27A.

This petition presents the issue of whether the congressional limitation to "crimes of violence" will be honored. The Tenth Circuit's opinion reads the civil liability provision in VAWA far more broadly than anyone debating the Act had ever suggested, finding a sufficient "risk" of violence lurking in disputed workplace interactions to allow a federal cause of action. In the Tenth Circuit, almost any person who can allege a nonconsensual touching by a person of the opposite sex can file a federal lawsuit. The implications of this holding for other bodies of law are monumental. For example, any plaintiff who alleges sexual harassment accompanied by physical contact of some type may by-pass the administrative remedies requirement of Title VII and simply proceed straight to federal court adjudication. This would make the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and its procedures superfluous and avoidable.

What constitutes a crime of violence for purposes of VAWA has been litigated frequently in the federal courts.[7] Because of the importance of the issue, the Court should grant the petition.

II. The Tenth Circuit's Ruling Creates a Conflict on Whether Unconsented Sexual Contact is a Crime of Violence under VAWA.

The decision below conflicts with other decisions of federal courts that have construed the phrase "crime of violence" in VAWA. Review by this Court is necessary to resolve the conflicts and confusions that the decision created. *See generally* Julie Goldscheid, *Gender-Motivated Violence: Developing a*

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[7] *See, e.g.*, pages 11-13 *infra* (discussing cases).

Meaningful Paradigm for Civil Rights Enforcement, 22 HARV. WOMEN'S L.J. 123 (1999) (concluding that federal courts have reached "mixed results" in construing the crimes of violence provision).

The Tenth Circuit held that any act of touching or sexual touching, if committed within Utah, is a crime of violence actionable under VAWA. Its conclusion conflicts with that of other federal courts, as no other court in the country as gone so far. The district court carefully reviewed the abundant precedents and reported "this Court has been unable to find a single case finding that a predicate statute similar to the one at issue constitutes a per se 'crime of violence.'" App., *infra*, 33A. Indeed, at least four other federal cases on strikingly similar facts have reached precisely the opposite conclusion of that of the Tenth Circuit.

In *Doe v. Hartz*, 134 F.3d 1339 (8th Cir. 1998), the plaintiff alleged sexual exploitation by a therapist who grabbed her, held her tightly, and kissed her. The Eighth Circuit found that this conduct would not rise to the level of a felony under either Iowa law or federal law. *Id.* at 1343; *cf.* 18 U.S.C. § 2244 (sexual contact with another person without consent of that person a misdemeanor punishable only by six months imprisonment). The dissenting judge also did not claim that the acts of fondling were generally crimes of violence. Instead, Judge Fagg relied upon the unique fact that the plaintiff had alleged that she was "emotionally dependent" on the therapist to create the necessary felony of sexual abuse of a dependent persons. *See id.* at 1344 (Fagg, J., dissenting).

In *Palazzolo v. Ruggiano*, 993 F. Supp. 45 (D.R.I. 1998), the plaintiff was a patient of a psychiatrist. The plaintiff alleged that on several occasions, during otherwise routine counseling sessions, the doctor placed his arms around her waist and pressed his genitals against her buttocks. The district court found that

these unconsented touchings were not crimes of violence under VAWA:

> It may well be that [the defendant's] contact was unwelcome and, if so, his conduct was deplorable and should be punished both criminally and civilly. However, its opprobrious nature does not convert it into an assault involving the "use of force or coercion" within the meaning of R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-37-4(2) [second degree sexual assault statute] or a "crime of violence" within the meaning of VAWA. To construe these terms in the manner suggested by [the plaintiff] would negate the express requirements of those statutes, trivialize VAWA and . . . make every unwelcome sexual touching a violent crime.

Id. at 48. The court further found that, even though an allegation of falsely engaging in medical treatment for the purpose of sexual gratification might be a felony under Rhode Island law, it was not a crime of violence because "a doctor who conducts the examination for improper reasons would have little need to resort to physical force." *Id.* at 49.

In *Wilson v. Diocese of New York of the Episcopal Church*, 1998 WL 82921 (S.D.N.Y. Feb. 26, 1998), the victim alleged unconsented acts of kissing, touching, and fondling. The court found that these allegations did not present a VAWA cause of action: because "there is no allegation of the use of force and no evidence of the use of actual or threatened force, the alleged conduct cannot be considered felonious under any relevant state law." *Id.* at *12 (*citing* Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-72a (felony sexual assault requires "use of force against" victim); N.Y. Penal Law § 130.65 (felony sexual abuse requires "forcible compulsion")). The court also concluded that the plaintiff had not shown that the allegations raised claims of "felonious conduct under federal law." *Id.* at *12.

In *Henderson v. Heartland Press, Inc.*, 65 F.Supp.2d 991 (N.D. Iowa 1999), the plaintiff alleged that a supervisor had driven her to a secluded location, rubbed her leg, and then kissed her on the lips, all against her will. The court concluded that these allegations did not allege a crime of violence because the conduct "did not rise to the level of sexual abuse" under Iowa law. *Id.* at 1001.

In contrast to these cases involving allegations of non-forcible sexual contact, cases involving allegations of *forcible* sex offenses have been allowed to proceed under VAWA. As the district court recognized below, these cases have involved allegations of "rape, varying forms of criminal assault and battery, and violent physical and mental abuse." App., *infra*, 25A.[8]

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[8] *See, e.g., Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*, 169 F.3d 820 (4th Cir. 1999)(gang rape by two football players), petns. for cert. granted, *United States v. Brzonkala*, No. 99-5, etc., 120 S.Ct. 11 (1999) ; *Liu v. Striuli*, 36 F.Supp.2d 452 (D.R.I. 1999) (forcible rape); *Doe v. Doe*, 929 F. Supp. 608 (D. Conn. 1996) (seventeen year pattern of physical and mental abuse, including throwing victim to the floor, throwing dangerous objects at her, threatening to kill her, and destroying her property); *Anisimov v. Lake*, 982 F. Supp. 531 (N.D. Ill.1997) (rape); *Wesley v. Don Stein Buick, Inc.*, 985 F. Supp. 1288, 1300 (D. Kan. 1997) (defendant physically charged victim with writing instruments in hand and subjected her to violent threats, menacing body gestures and threatening screams and shouts); *Crisonino v. New York City Housing Authority*, 985 F. Supp. 385, 393 (S.D.N.Y.1997) (second degree assault in which defendant violently pushed victim to the ground causing injuries to her chest, head, neck, shoulder, and arm); *Newton v. Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consol.*, 958 F.Supp. 248 (W.D.N.C.1997) ("sexual assault"; nature of allegations not further elaborated because only issue was removability to federal court); *Mattison v. Click Corp. of America, Inc.*, 1998 WL 748724 (E.D. PA, Jan 27, 1998) (sexual assault, sexual intercourse because victim feared for her safety, and battering); *Seaton v. Seaton*, 971 F.Supp. 1188 (E.D. Tenn.1997) (physical and sexual abuse, assault, battery, false imprisonment); *see also Braden v. Piggly Wiggly*, 1998 WL 230027 (M.D. Ala. 1998) (allowing plaintiff to proceed if complaint amended for sexual assault with injuries requiring two hospitalizations). Cf. *Smathers v. Webb*, 1999 WL 1046625 (6th Cir. 1999) (unpublished) (no crime of violence under VAWA in allegations of vulgar telephone calls that did not "threaten to injure, or coerce" plaintiff).

In the courts below, respondents argued that the cases dismissing VAWA claims — such as *Palazzolo v. Ruggiano* — rested simply on the grounds that the plaintiffs had been unable to discover a state law felony covering unconsented to touching. If so, this fact alone creates a reason for granting this petition, as it demonstrates that the Tenth Circuit's decision allows the vagaries of an expansive Utah law to dictate the substantive coverage of the federal statute. *See* Part IV, *infra* (developing this argument). More generally, the respondents fail to recognize that these decisions rejecting VAWA claims based on fondling do not rest solely on the failure-to-find-a-statute ground. Indeed, in *Palazzolo v. Ruggiano*, the court went out of its way to explain generally that "[t]here are ample remedies available to [the plaintiff] . . . that do not require obliterating the distinction between unwelcome sexual contact that involves force or coercions and unwelcome sexual contact that does not." 993 F. Supp. at 48. *Palazzolo*, indeed, recognized that the plaintiff could identify a state law felony covering the allegations -- a felony prohibiting "medical treatment . . . for the purpose of sexual arousal," – precisely the kind of misconduct alleged here. The court explained that the plaintiff "offers little support for the proposition that the threat of violence is inherent in a situation where a doctor, in examining a patient, does so for the purpose of sexual gratification." *Id.* at 49. This conclusion, of course, is flatly at odds with the view of the Tenth Circuit below that all unwelcome sexual contact constitutes a crime of violence. Only review by this Court can resolve the conflicting approaches to applying the provisions of VAWA.

III. The Tenth Circuit's Decision Aggravates a Conflict Among the Circuits on Whether Unconsented Sexual or other Contact Always Presents a Risk of Violence.

While the conflict in approaches to interpreting VAWA is itself sufficient reason for granting the petition, the need for review is heightened by the fact that the Tenth Circuit's "crime of violence" interpretation will affect several other federal

enactments. In particular, VAWA defines "crime of violence" by cross-referencing the federal criminal code, 18 U.S.C. § 16:

> the term "crime of violence" means —
>
> (A) an act . . . that would constitute a felony against the person . . . if the conduct presents a serious risk of physical injury to another, and *that would come within the meaning of State or Federal offenses described in section 16 of title 18* . . . .

42 U.S.C. 13981(d)(2)(A) (emphasis added). The § 16 criminal code definition, in turn, is quite similar to that found for sentence enhancements for career offenders (USSG §§ 4B1.1 to .2), armed career criminals (USSG § 4B1.4; 18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(3)); unlawfully entering the United States having been deported after a conviction for an "aggravated felony" (USSG § 2L1.2(B)(1)(A); 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(43)). The term "crime of violence" also appears in the Bail Reform Act (18 U.S.C. § 3156(a)(4)(B). The Courts of Appeals have viewed the definition of "crime of violence" found in 18 U.S.C. § 16 as essentially interchangeable with definitions in the Sentencing Guidelines. *See, e.g., United States v. Coronado-Cervantes*, 154 F.3d 1242, 1244 (10th Cir. 1998) (finding § 16 authority to be "persuasive" on guidelines issue); *United States v. Kirk*, 111 F.3d 390, 394 (5th Cir. 1997) (two definitions are "substantially similar" and "the reasoning employed in § 16 cases is persuasive authority for the conclusion reached today"); *United States v. Bauer*, 990 F.2d 373 (8th Cir. 1993) ("any distinction [between Sentencing Guidelines and § 16] is without consequence to our decision herein"). The Tenth Circuit below expressly recognized that its holding would affect the interpretation of such criminal provisions. *See* App., *infra*, 9A. Thus, today in the Tenth Circuit, the offense of touching another person without her consent is a "crime of violence" subject to enhanced criminal penalties or sentences in various contexts.

This conclusion is at odds with the position of the Seventh Circuit and perhaps several other circuits as well.[9] The Seventh Circuit expressly disagreed with the Tenth Circuit's earlier conclusion that unconsented sexual contact *with children* should be viewed as a crime of violence, even before the Tenth Circuit had vastly expanded this reasoning by extending it in the decision below to sexual contact with adults. In *United States v. Reyes-Castro*, 13 F.3d 377, 379 (10th Cir. 1993), the Tenth Circuit concluded that any nonconsensual sexual contact with a child was a crime of violence. *Reyes-Castro* was the cornerstone of the decision below. *See* App., *infra*, 5A-13A (repeatedly discussing *Reyes-Castro* and relying on the "precedential authority of the decision" as a basis for the holding).

The Seventh Circuit flatly disagrees with this approach. The most notable of its cases on this point is *United States v. Shannon*, 110 F.3d 382, 385-86 (7th Cir. 1997) (en banc), which rejected the government's argument under the Sentencing Guidelines "that *any* felonious sexual act with a minor should be deemed either to involve force, because the minor is incapable of giving legally

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[9] The Tenth Circuit's holding also contrasts sharply with other holdings finding no "crime of violence" in far more aggravated circumstances than presented here. For example, drug trafficking has been found not to be a crime of violence under § 16. *See, e.g., United States v. Cruz*, 805 F.2d 1464, 1474 (11th Cir. 1986) (engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise, conspiracy to distribute narcotics and possession with intent to distribute "are not crimes of violence within the meaning of § 16(b)"), *cert. denied*, 481 U.S. 1006 (1987); see *also Downey v. Crabtree*, 100 F.3d 662, 670 (9th Cir. 1996) (concluding drug trafficking offense is not a crime of violence under analogous statute). Similarly, felons who possess firearms have not committed a crime of violence. See *United States v. Walker*, 930 F.2d 789, 794 (10th Cir. 1991) (disagreeing with claim that "possession of a firearm by a convicted felon necessarily constitutes a crime of violence"); *accord United States v. Canon*, 993 F.2d 1439, 1441-42 (9th Cir. 1993) (felon in possession is not a violent crime). *Cf. United States v. Smith*, 10 F.3d 724, 733-34 (10th Cir. 1993) (second degree burglary conviction not a "crime of violence"). Thus, the Tenth Circuit's jarring holding concludes that any sexual touching poses a more serious risk of "physical force" than major narcotics trafficking organizations and felons in possession of firearms.

recognized consent, or to involve conduct that presents a serious risk of physical injury."[10] (Emphasis added.)

Shannon went on to specifically "distinguish[]" the Tenth Circuit's ruling in *Reyes-Castro* and similar cases in other circuits as resting on the grounds that they involved "a prepubescent child, incest, or other aggravating factors and in none, so far as appears from the court's factual recitation, was the minor at the top of the relevant age range . . . ." *Id.* at 386. The district court below recognized that the Seventh Circuit's en banc decision in *Shannon* counseled against a broad reading of *Reyes-Castro*, *see* App., *infra*, 33A, but the Tenth Circuit simply chose to ignore the split it was creating with *Shannon*. Nor is *Shannon* the only case to raise questions about the breadth of *Reyes-Castro*. *See United States v. Meader*, 118 F.3d 876, 885 n.15 (1st Cir. 1997) (questioning *Reyes-Castro* for "framing [its] holding[] broadly . . . notwithstanding the lack of supporting data"), *cert. denied*, 118 S.Ct. 729 (1998). Although *Reyes-Castro* has not been followed in these other circuits, it at least rested on the understandable argument that "when an older person attempts to sexually touch a child *under the age of fourteen*, there is always a substantial risk that physical force will be used to ensure the child's compliance." *Reyes-Castro*, 13 F.3d at 379 (emphasis added). But when the touching is not of a child under the age of fourteen — but of an adult well over the age of eighteen — that rationale disappears entirely. Thus, the decision below is on far more infirm ground than that staked out in *Reyes-Castro*.

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[10] In the court below, respondents' argued that Judge Posner's opinion, written on behalf of the Seventh Circuit en banc, should be viewed as "dicta" because he ultimately concluded that the crime at issue was in fact a "crime of violence." This is a strange view of the holding, as the lengthy opinion was clearly predicated on the analysis outlined by Judge Posner. Moreover, subsequent Seventh Circuit decisions have followed *Shannon*'s approach. *See, e.g., Xiong v. INS*, 173 F.3d 601, 604 (7th Cir. 1999) ("Our starting point is *United States v. Shannon* . . . ."); *United States v. Thomas*, 159 F.3d 296, 298 (7th Cir. 1998) (finding crime not a violent one under *Shannon*'s analysis).

The Seventh Circuit also disagrees with another aspect of the decision below and its predecessor, *Reyes-Castro*. As just noted, in both of these decisions, the Tenth Circuit found an unconsented sexual touching itself created a "substantial" risk that "physical force [would] be exerted to ensure compliance." App., *infra*, 12A (discussing *Reyes-Castro*). The Seventh Circuit en banc has expressly repudiated this reasoning, explaining that "[a]n inference of violence from mere unconsented-to physical contact . . . would not wash in this circuit. It would transform any unconsented-to touching that the law has made a felony into a crime of violence, including picking a person's pocket, a crime that we have held is not a crime of violence . . . ." *Shannon*, 110 F.3d at 385, *citing United States v. Lee*, 22 F.3d 736 (7th Cir. 1994); *Lowe v. United States*. 923 F.2d 528, 530 (7th Cir. 1991); *United States v. Mathis*, 963 F.3d 399, 406-10 (D.C. Cir. 1992). In staking out this position, the Seventh Circuit acknowledged a clear split among the circuits on this point, citing two circuits that had reached the opposite conclusion. *Shannon*, 110 F.3d at 386, *citing United States v. Mobley*, 40 F.3d 688, 696 (4th Cir. 1994): *United States v. McVicar*, 907 F.2d 1 (1st Cir. 1990) (Breyer, J.). Since then, the Sixth Circuit, too, has recognized the split among the circuits on this point, expressly declining to follow the Seventh Circuit's approach and concluding that "any person falling victim to a crime involving such an invasion of personal space would likely resist or defend in a manner that could lead to immediate violence." *United States v. Payne*, 163 F.3d 371 (6th Cir. 1998).

To be sure, this split in the circuits might be parsimoniously viewed as involving only the question of whether pick pocketing and other personal larcenies are crimes of violence. But there can be no doubt that the courts of appeals have reached differing conclusions on the underlying issue at the heart of Tenth Circuit holding below – whether lack of consent creates a sufficient risk of escalation to violence so as to create a "crime of violence." Only review by this Court can resolve this fundamental issue.

Finally, the decision below conflicts with the approach of the Sentencing Guidelines. The Sentencing Guidelines identify "forcible sex offenses" as crimes of violence, *see* USSG § 4B1.2 commentary, obviously indicating the common sense conclusion that there are non-forcible sex offenses. In evaluating this commentary, the Courts of Appeals have agreed that some sex offenses can be viewed as non-forcible. *See, e.g., United States v. Shannon*, 110 F.3d 382, 388 (7th Cir. 1997) ("the only class of sex offenses to which the guideline commentary refers in a list of examples of crimes of violence is 'forcible sex offenses'"); *United States v. Coronado-Cervantes*, 154 F.3d 1242, 1245 (10th Cir. 1998) ("we do not believe that the inclusion of the phrase 'forcible sex offenses' means that non-forcible sex offenses cannot ever be considered 'crimes of violence' . . . ."); *United States v. Arnold*, 58 F.3d 1117, 1123 (6th Cir. 1995) (Tennessee statute of assault with intent to commit sexual battery might or might not be a crime of violence). The decision below simply buried these subtleties, concluding that non-forcible sex offenses must *always* be considered "crimes of violence." This far-reaching conclusion should be reviewed.

IV. The Decision Below Creates Uneven Application of VAWA Among the States By Allowing a Label in a State Statute to Dictate the Scope of Federal Law.

A final reason for reviewing the decision below is that it creates disparate application of VAWA among the states. In placing dispositive weight on the fact that Utah has an expansive felony statute labeling all touching and indecent liberties as "violent," the Tenth Circuit has allowed an action to go forward that could not proceed in other states. This is contrary not only to the general presumption that federal statutes should be uniformly applied, but to the specific intention of the drafters of VAWA and the general approach of other circuits.

The underlying allegations in this case were based on Utah's statute criminalizing "indecent liberties," Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404(1), which provides (emphasis added):

> A person commits *forcible* sexual abuse if the victim is 14 years of age or older and, under circumstances not amounting to rape, object rape, sodomy, or attempted rape or sodomy, the actor touches the anus, buttocks, or any part of the genitals of another, or touches the breast of a female, or otherwise takes indecent liberties with another ... with intent to cause substantial emotional or bodily pain to any person or with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, without the consent of the other, regardless of the sex of any participant.

This broadly-worded statute makes any unconsented sexual touching or any other "indecent liberty" a second-degree felony in Utah and, for good measure, labels it a "forcible" felony. The decision below concluded that this was enough to establish a crime of violence, explaining that under Utah law the offense of indecent liberties "represents a particular subset of assault and battery." App., *infra*, 10A.

In doing so, the decision below disregarded the fact that Utah has chosen to label conduct as a "forcible" felony that in many other jurisdictions would not even be regarded as felony, much less a violent one. For instance, the Model Penal Code defines the offense of "sexual assault" in misdemeanor terms. *See* Model Penal Code § 213.4 ("a person who has sexual contact with another . . . is guilty of sexual assault, a misdemeanor, if . . . he knows that the contact is offensive to the other person"). Along these lines, a nonconsensual sexual touching is treated as a misdemeanor in federal courts[11] and in a number of states in the

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11 18 U.S.C. § 2244(b) (six month misdemeanor to "knowingly engage[] in sexual contact with another person without that other person's permission").

Tenth Circuit and elsewhere.[12] In other states, "indecent liberties" are proscribed as felonies, but the term is limited to forcible conduct or conduct with a child.[13] "Violent" sex offenses

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12 DEL. C. § 767 (class A misdemeanor to have "sexual contact with another person . . . and the person knows that the contact is either offensive to the victim or occurs without the victim's consent); COLO. REV. STAT. § 18-3-404 (class 1 misdemeanor to "subject a victim to any sexual contact . . . [knowing] that the victim does not consent"; becomes class 4 felony if actor compels victim to submit by use of force, intimidation, or threat); D.C. CODE § 22-4106 (defining "misdemeanor sexual abuse" as engaging "in a sexual act or sexual contact with another person" when having "knowledge or reason to know that the act was committed without that other person's permission"); *cf.* D.C. CODE § 22-4105 (defining fourth degree sexual abuse, a felony, as engaging in "sexual contact with . . . another person . . . [b]y threatening or placing that other person in reasonable fear . . . ."); KANS. STAT. ANN. § 21-3517 (class A misdemeanor is "the intentional touching of the person of another who is 16 or more years of age, who is not the spouse of the offender and who does not consent thereto, with the intent to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires of the offender or another"); *cf.* KANS. STAT. ANN. § 21-3518 (same act becomes level 5 felony "when the victim is overcome by force or fear"); PA. CONS. STAT. § 3126(a)(1) ("indecent assault," a misdemeanor in the second degree, is to have "indecent contact with the complainant . . . without the complainant's consent"); MD. CODE ANN. § 464C(1) (fourth degree sexual offense, a misdemeanor, if the person engages . . .[i]n sexual contact with another person against the will and without the consent of the other person"); N.D. CENT. CODE § 12.1-20-07(a) (misdemeanor sexual assault for a person to knowingly have "sexual contact with another person . . . if . . . [t]hat person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the contact is offensive to the other person"); *cf.* N.D. CENT. CODE § 12.1-20-04 (felony sexual imposition for a person to knowingly have "sexual contact with another . . . if the actor compels the other person to submit by any threat that would render a person of reasonable firmness incapable of resisting"); OHIO REV. CODE § 2907.06(1) (misdemeanor of sexual imposition for person to "have sexual contact with another . . . [when] [t]he offender knows that the sexual contact is offensive to the other person"); *cf.* OHIO. REV. CODE § 2907.05(1) (felony of gross sexual imposition for a person to "have sexual contact with another . . . [when] [t]he offender purposely compels the other person, or one of the other persons, to submit by force or threat of force"); *see also* Section II, *supra* (discussing cases reviewing statutes in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and Iowa that do treat unconsented sexual contact as a violent felony).

13 *See, e.g.*, WASH. REV. CODE § 9A.44.100(a) (defining offense of "indecent liberties" as to "knowingly cause[] another person . . . to have sexual contact with him or another . . . [b]y forcible compulsion").

have also been defined in ways that do not include an unconsented sexual touching.[14]

The undeniable result of these differing state definitions is that the Tenth Circuit's decision allows VAWA suits to move forward on allegations of unconsented-to touching in Utah (and in other states with similar statutes) that would not proceed elsewhere because they were not "crimes of violence." This flies in the face of this Court's approach in *Taylor v. United States*, 495 U.S. 575, 590 (1990), which considered the analogous problem of construing a federal statute that imposed an enhanced penalty on defendants with prior convictions for a "violent felony." There, this Court found it "implausible" that Congress intended the reach of the federal statute to "depend on the definition adopted by the State[s] . . . ." This Court explained that *"absent plain indication to the contrary*, federal laws are not to be construed so that their application is dependent on state law, 'because the application of federal legislation is nationwide and at times the federal program would be impaired if state law were to control.'" *Id.* at 591 (emphasis added) (*quoting Dickerson v. New Banner Institute, Inc.*, 460 U.S. 103, 119-20 (1983)). Thus, the Court constructed a definition of the relevant offense that had "some uniform definition independent of the labels employed by the various states' criminal codes." *Id.* at 592.

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14 *See, e.g.*, ARK. ST. § 5-14-108 and -101 (defining sexual abuse in the first degree as "sexual contact with another person by forcible compulsion" and defining "forcible compulsion" as "physical force or a threat, express or implied, of death or physical injury to or kidnapping of any person"); KANS. STAT. ANN. § 22-3717 (defining "sexually violent crime" as *not* including misdemeanor sexual touching); KY. REV. STAT. § 510.110(1)(a) & 510.010(2) (defining sexual abuse in the first degree as sexual contact with another person by forcible compulsion and defining "forcible compulsion" as "physical force or threat of physical force, express or implied, which places a person in fear of immediate death, physical injury to self or another person, fear of the immediate kidnap of self or another person, or fear of any offense under this chapter"; WASH. REV. CODE § 9A.41.010 (defining "crime of violence" as including "indecent liberties if committed by forcible compulsion").

Far from possessing "plain indications to the contrary," VAWA in fact gives every indication that it should be construed uniformly. The statute expressly indicates its animating purpose it so insure that "*all* persons within the United States shall have the right to be free from crimes of violence motivated by gender . . . ." 42 U.S.C. § 13981(b) (emphasis added). The legislative history fully confirms that VAWA's protections were to extend evenly across the country. *See, e.g.*, S. REP. NO. 101-545, at 117 (1990) (VAWA "makes a national commitment to condemn crimes motivated by gender"); 140 Cong. Rec. S6098 (daily ed. May 19, 1994) (statement of Sen. Biden) (VAWA "places the cause of action in the Federal courts . . . because the Federal courts have traditionally been charged with enforcing national principles of equality"). This purpose would, of course, be thwarted if the protections in the statute turned on peculiarities of state law. As the district court below concluded, in construing VAWA "a policy to further federal uniformity can and should be applied." App., *infra*, 25A. 127. *Cf. United States v. Shannon*, 110 F.3d 382, 386 (7th Cir. 1997) (refusing to permit "crime of violence" determination under Sentencing Guidelines to be "a mechanical function of the laws of the different states" because it would "be arbitrary" and "would treat 'crime of violence' as a question of state rather than federal law").

Adopting a uniform approach to construing VAWA does not, as the Tenth Circuit erroneously concluded, mean discarding a "categorical" approach to reviewing such issues. This Court has expressed its preference for a "categorical" approach to avoid the need for inquiry into the facts underlying disputed transactions. *See, e.g., Taylor v. United States*, 495 U.S. 575, 600-02 (1990). At the same time, however, this Court has recognized that in some situations courts must look at the underlying facts. *Id.* at 602. Because Utah's indecent liberties statute sweeps so broadly and embraces a wide range of violent and non-violent conduct, it was incumbent on the Tenth Circuit to examine the allegations in this particular case to determine whether they involved violence. Indeed, in other cases, the Tenth Circuit has done precisely this, explaining that while a court can ordinarily make the crime of

violence determination by looking only to the criminal statute involved, "a court can look beyond the statutory count of conviction in order to resolve a patent ambiguity caused by a broad state statute." *United States v. Smith*, 10 F.3d 724, 733 (10th Cir. 1993) (*citing Taylor*, 495 U.S. at 602). Other Courts of Appeals have done the same in analogous circumstances. *See, e.g., United States v. Kirk*, 111 F.3d 390, 395-96 n.8 (5th Cir. 1997) (concluding that, while sexual indecency with a child is under many circumstances a crime of violence, there may exist situations where it is not); *United States v. Winter*, 22 F.3d 15 (1st Cir. 1994) (when statutory language blankets both violent and non-violent crimes, a court may go beyond the legislature's definition of the crime); *United States v. Harris*, 964 F.2d 1234 (1st Cir. 1992) (looking at the statutory language alone will not be enough if the statute's language covers violent and non-violent crimes).

Only review by this Court can secure uniform application of VAWA and resolve the tension between the approach of the Tenth Circuit and other courts as to the methodology for determining which actions fall within the category of "violence crimes."

CONCLUSION

The Court should grant the petition for Writ of Certiorari.

Respectfully submitted.

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December 30, 1999

Appendix

MELANIE MCCANN, NOELE NELSON, LISA NIELSON, Plaintiffs - Appellants, v. BRYON L. ROSQUIST, D.C., P.C., a Utah corporation; BRYON L. ROSQUIST, individually, Defendants - Appellees.

No. 98-4049

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

185 F.3d 1113; 1999 U.S. App. LEXIS 18174; 76 Empl. Prac. Dec. (CCH) P46,053; 1999 Colo. J. C.A.R. 4730

August 3, 1999, Filed

PRIOR HISTORY: [**1] Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Utah. (D.C. No. 97-CV-535-S). D.C. Judge DAVID SAM.

DISPOSITION: REVERSED and remanded.

CORE TERMS: sexual abuse, physical force, crime of violence, violence, substantial risk, forcible, burglary, felony, rape, indecent, sexual, crimes of violence, generic, violent felony, nonconsensual, categorical, gender, adult, state law, sex, definition of burglary, lack of consent, cause of action, physical injury, commits, Fourteenth Amendment, statutory definition, required to state, ensure compliance, clear legislative

COUNSEL: Larry S. Jenkins (Mary Anne Q. Wood, with him on the briefs), Wood Crapo LLC, Salt Lake City, Utah, for the Plaintiffs - Appellants.

Brent O. Hatch, Hatch & James P.C., Salt Lake City, Utah, for the Defendants - Appellees.

JUDGES: Before PORFILIO, LUCERO and COOK *, Circuit Judges.

* The Honorable H. Dale Cook, United States Senior District Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma, sitting by designation.

OPINIONBY: LUCERO

OPINION:

[*1114] LUCERO, Circuit Judge.

This case requires us to determine whether the Utah criminal offense of forcible sexual abuse, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404, constitutes a "crime of violence" within the meaning of *18 U.S.C. § 16.* Because we conclude that the offense of forcible sexual abuse prohibited in the Utah statute implicates a significant risk of application of physical force, we reverse the district court's dismissal of plaintiffs' complaint for failure to state a cause of action under the Gender Motivated Violence Act (GMVA), the civil liability provision of the Violence Against Women [**2] Act (VAWA), *42 U.S.C. § 13981.*

I

This appeal arises out of a civil action by plaintiffs-appellants Melanie McCann, Noele Nelson, and Lisa Nielson, against [*1115] their former employer, chiropractor Bryon Rosquist. In their complaint, plaintiffs allege that during the course of their employment, Rosquist repeatedly fondled and rubbed their buttocks, breasts, and genital areas clothed and unclothed, without their consent and with the intent to gratify his sexual desire. The conduct occurred in the course of chiropractic examinations and ostensible adjustments that Rosquist allegedly required only of his female employees as a condition of their employment, as well as in other situations both in Rosquist's place of business and at workplace social events. In July 1997, after all plaintiffs had left or been terminated from Rosquist's employ, they filed suit in federal district court, alleging violation of the GMVA as well as state law claims for intentional infliction of emotional distress, assault, battery, invasion of privacy, breach of contract, breach of the

covenant of good faith and fair dealing, wrongful termination in violation of public policy, and constructive [**3] termination.

Rosquist moved, pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6), to dismiss plaintiffs' actions for failure to state a federal claim under the VAWA and for the ensuing lack of supplemental federal jurisdiction over state law claims. The district court dismissed plaintiffs' suit, reasoning that although they had met the first element of the GMVA by alleging a felony against the person under Utah law, the felony alleged, forcible sexual abuse, is not a "crime of violence" under *18 U.S.C. § 16.* See *McCann v. Rosquist, 998 F. Supp. 1246, 1248, 1252 (D. Utah 1998).* The district court concluded that "while the conduct alleged is offensive and repulsive, and according to U.C.A. § 76-5-404, a felony, it is not of the violent nature required to state a cause of action under GMVA." *Id. at 1252.* Plaintiffs now appeal. We have jurisdiction pursuant to *28 U.S.C. § 1291,* and reverse.

II

The GMVA provides for a civil cause of action against any person "who commits a crime of violence motivated by gender." *42 U.S.C. § 13981*(c). "Crime of violence" is defined in relevant part as "an act [**4] or series of acts that would constitute a felony against the person . . . and that would come within the meaning of State or Federal offenses described in section 16 of Title 18." *42 U.S.C. § 13981*(d)(2)(A).

Plaintiffs' complaint alleges a state law felony against the person, namely forcible sexual abuse, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404. n1 Cf. *Doe v. Hartz, 134 F.3d 1339, 1343 (8th Cir. 1998)* (dismissing suit under the GMVA for failure to allege a predicate felony under state or federal law). In addition, it is undisputed that Rosquist's alleged actions were motivated by gender. See *McCann, 998 F. Supp. at 1252-53* (rejecting argument, apparently abandoned on appeal, that Rosquist's action was not motivated by gender because the alleged conduct was "'amorous' as opposed to

being based on 'animus'"). The dispositive question before us is whether the acts alleged come within the meaning of *18 U.S.C. § 16.*

n1 Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404(1) provides that

> [a] person commits forcible sexual abuse if the victim is 14 years of age or older and, under circumstances not amounting to rape, object rape, sodomy, or attempted rape or sodomy, the actor touches the anus, buttocks, or any part of the genitals of another, or touches the breast of a female, or otherwise takes indecent liberties with another, or causes another to take indecent liberties with the actor or another, with intent to cause substantial emotional or bodily pain to any person or with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, without the consent of the other, regardless of the sex of the participant.

[**5] Section 16(a) defines a crime of violence as "an offense that has as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another." Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404 does not have such an element. See *State v. Kennedy, 616 P.2d 594, 597-98 (Utah 1980)* (stating, in discussion of analogous earlier version of forcible sexual abuse statute, that "the law is clear in [*1116] this state that outright violence is not a necessary element of a crime requiring lack of consent"). Plaintiffs maintain, rather, that *18 U.S.C. § 16*(b), defining "crime of violence" as "any other offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense," includes the offense at issue in the instant action, and thus they state a claim under the GMVA.

III

Our disposition of the case hinges upon our determination of whether the Utah offense of forcible sexual abuse fits within the definition of an offense "that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property [**6] of another may be used." *18 U.S.C. § 16*(b). Our initial step in that determination is to ascertain the appropriate level of generality at which we assess "substantial risk." Specifically, we must determine whether we consider, for purposes of assessing substantial risk under § 16(b), only the offense as defined by state law, or whether we can take into account the particular conduct alleged.

A

We conclude that the language of *18 U.S.C. § 16* and our precedents require that the crime of violence analysis be conducted at the level of the statutory definition. See *United States v. Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d 377, 379 (10th Cir. 1993)* (holding that "a court must only look to the statutory definition, not the underlying circumstances of the crime" to determine whether a given offense is "by its nature a crime of violence" for purposes of *18 U.S.C. § 16)* (citing *United States v. Rodriguez, 979 F.2d 138, 141 (8th Cir. 1992)).* Applying what has been termed a "categorical approach" to defining offenses for crime of violence determinations, we concluded in Reyes-Castro that attempted sexual [**7] abuse of a child, in violation of Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404.1(1), "by its nature" involves a "substantial risk" of physical force. *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379.* Notably, the elements of that statute, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404.1(1), are essentially identical to the elements of forcible sexual abuse, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404, differing only with respect to the age of the victim and the absence of an explicit lack-of-consent element, not to the behavior criminalized. n2

n2 Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404.1(1) provides that

> a person commits sexual abuse of a child if, under circumstances not amounting to rape of a child, object rape of a child, sodomy upon a child, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses, the actor touches the anus, buttocks, or genitalia of any child, the breast of a female child younger than 14 years of age, or otherwise takes indecent liberties with a child, or causes a child to take indecent liberties with the actor or another with intent to cause substantial emotional or bodily pain to any person or with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person regardless of the sex of any participant.

[**8] The district court in this case, however, declined to apply the approach of Reyes-Castro to determine whether the Utah offense is, by its nature, a crime of violence under § 16. The court relied instead on *Taylor v. United States, 495 U.S. 575, 109 L. Ed. 2d 607, 110 S. Ct. 2143 (1990),* to find that forcible sexual abuse is an offense that falls within the so-called "Taylor exception." See *McCann, 998 F. Supp. 1246 at 1250-51.* Citing this exception, the district court based its analysis on the particular circumstances of the alleged acts in this case. See *id. at 1252.*

In Taylor, the Supreme Court considered whether a conviction under the Missouri burglary statute constituted "burglary" for purposes of the sentence enhancement for violent felonies, specifically including burglary, imposed by *18 U.S.C. § 924*(e). The Court rejected the notion that "burglary" under *18 U.S.C. § 924*(e)(2)(B)(ii) refers to any offense labeled "burglary" by the relevant State, and concluded instead that Congress intended to establish, for purposes of [*1117] § 924(e)(2)(B)(ii), a uniform federal definition of [**9] burglary as a violent felony. See *Taylor, 495 U.S. at 590.* Under this approach, the Court adopted a "generic" definition of burglary as unlawful entry into a building or structure for purposes of the violent felony sentence enhancement, and considered whether the defendant's conviction, under a burglary statute that did not utilize this "generic"

definition, constituted a conviction for "burglary" within the meaning of § 924(e)(2)(B)(ii). *Id. at 598-99.*

The Court in Taylor laid out a "categorical approach" for determining whether a state burglary statute satisfies the elements of federally-defined "generic burglary" for purposes of *18 U.S.C. § 924*(e). *Id. at 600.* Although normally this approach looks "only to the statutory definitions of the prior offenses, and not to the particular facts" underlying the convictions at issue, id., nevertheless, the Court stated, "this categorical approach . . . may permit the sentencing court to go beyond the mere fact of conviction in a narrow range of cases where a jury was actually required to find all the elements of generic burglary." *Id. at 602.* [**10] The district court concluded that such an exception applied here, and thus went on to conclude that Rosquist's particular acts, in context, did not involve a substantial risk of physical force:

> The actions alleged do not constitute an offense that by its nature involved a substantial risk of the type of physical force required to state a cause of action under GMVA. Likewise, the time, place, manner, and other circumstances alleged are not such that the situation could escalate into one where there would be a substantial risk that physical force would be used. All of the acts alleged appear to have occurred at work or at social activities under circumstances that would have greatly discouraged any escalation of contact to the type of violent conduct required within the meaning of section 16(b) and GMVA.
>
> *McCann, 998 F. Supp. at 1252.*

The "Taylor exception," however, is far narrower than the district court assumed, and does not envision the type of case-by-case inquiry that the district court applied. In *United States v. Permenter, 969 F.2d 911, 913-14 (10th Cir. 1992),* we rejected the contention that the Taylor exception should [**11] extend beyond enumerated offenses to the "otherwise" clause of *18 U.S.C.*

§ *924*(e)(2)(B)(ii), which provides for defining an offense as a qualifying crime of violence in general terms--as does U.S.C. § 16. n3 The "Taylor exception" is therefore restricted to cases in which a court looks beyond the simple fact of a conviction to determine whether the offense meets the elements of certain specific offenses enumerated in § 924(e)(2)(B)(ii). See *Permenter, 969 F.2d at 913.* The exception does not apply to the "otherwise" clause of § 924(e)(2)(B)(ii), which defines "violent felony" as a felony that "otherwise involves conduct that presents a serious potential risk of physical injury to another." Likewise, it does not apply by analogy to *18 U.S.C. § 16,* the statutory provision defining crimes of violence. Rather, § 16 is closely analogous to the "otherwise" clause of § 924(e)(2)(B)(ii), which defines a violent felony in general terms. Therefore, Permenter prohibits application of the "Taylor exception," or any equivalent exception to the categorical approach, when examining an offense to determine whether it qualifies [**12] as a "crime of violence" under *18 U.S.C. § 16.* n4

n3 *18 U.S.C. § 924*(e)(2)(B) defines the term "violent felony," in relevant part, as a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than one year that:

(ii) is burglary, arson, or extortion, involves use of explosives, or otherwise involves conduct that presents a serious potential risk of physical injury to another.

n4 Moreover, even when applicable, the Taylor exception does not permit a subjective injury as to whether particular factual circumstances involve a risk of violence. See *Taylor, 495 U.S. at 601* (warning of "the practical difficulties and potential unfairness of a factual approach"). Rather, when applicable, it allows a court to look beyond the fact of conviction to determine whether the "definition [of a particular enumerated crime] is met by a specific conviction." *Permenter, 969 F.2d at 914.*

[*1118] B Section 16 also differs from the particular burglary [**13] provision of § 924(e) at issue in Taylor, in that our analysis under § 16 focuses on the terms of the particular state or federal statute at issue, rather than on constructing a generic federal definition for every conceivable offense. See *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379* (citing Taylor and referring to its categorical approach as analogous supporting authority, rather than as directly controlling authority, for the approach to crime of violence analysis under § 16). The Taylor Court concluded that, in enumerating the specific offense of burglary in § 924(e)(2)(B)(ii), Congress intended to apply a uniform federal definition of burglary. See *Taylor, 495 U.S. at 592.* Section 16, by contrast, does not refer to specific offenses, but rather provides a general definition for the category of crimes of violence. In addition, Congress has applied the § 16 definition, in a variety of contexts, to various state and federal offenses. See, e.g., *8 U.S.C. § 1101*(a)(43) (defining aggravated felony, for immigration purposes, by reference to *18 U.S.C. § 16); 8 U.S.C. § 1227*(a)(2)(E)(i) [**14] (defining domestic violence offenses, for deportation purposes, by reference to *18 U.S.C. § 16); 42 U.S.C. § 13891*(d)(2)(A) (defining predicate offenses, for purposes of GMVA liability, by reference to *18 U.S.C. § 16).*

Thus, § 16 does not demonstrate Congressional intent to require comparison with a particular uniform federally-defined offense, such as burglary. The Court's conclusion in Taylor that "Congress meant by 'burglary' the generic sense in which the term is now used in the criminal codes of most States," *495 U.S. at 598,* does not extend to the broader proposition that Congress intended uniform federal definitions for all offenses--none specifically enumerated--in conducting crime of violence analyses under under *18 U.S.C. § 16.* To import such a requirement would impose on federal courts the overwhelming and ultimately pointless task of creating generic federal definitions for all crimes, even those lacking any clear common-law origin or general consensus on their elements. Cf. *Taylor, 495 U.S. at 592-94* (discussing common-law origin and shared core [**15] definition of burglary). Therefore, under Reyes-Castro, we focus only on the

elements of a particular state statute in applying § 16, and do not attempt to construct a uniform federal definition for the offense at issue. See *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379.*

C

Having determined our approach to § 16(b) and the GMVA, the question before us is whether forcible sexual abuse, as defined under Utah law, carries a similarly substantial risk of physical force as does attempted sexual abuse of a child, the crime of violence at issue in Reyes-Castro. n5 Forcible sexual abuse, as defined in Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404 as intentional sexual touching of another with a particular mental state and without consent, represents a particular subset of assault and battery. n6 See *State v. Jones, 878 P.2d [*1119] 1175, 1177 (Utah Ct. App. 1994)* (concluding that assault, "an act committed with unlawful force or violence, that causes or creates a substantial risk of bodily injury to another," Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-102, may be a lesser included offense of forcible sexual abuse); cf. *Palazzolo v. Ruggiano, 993 F. Supp. 45, 47-49 (D.R.I. 1998)* (dismissing, [**16] for failure to state a predicate crime of violence for purposes of the GMVA, a suit alleging violation of R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-37-4(3), a statutory provision that does not require as an element either use of force or lack of consent).

n5 We look to the elements of the statute, not just the fact that it is labeled "forcible," in conducting our analysis under *18 U.S.C. § 16*(b). See *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379* (examining elements of statutory definition of crime).

n6 Although the Utah statute also provides that a person commits forcible sexual abuse if that person "otherwise takes indecent liberties with another, or causes another to take indecent liberties with the actor or another," Utah courts have read this language narrowly, holding that "indecent liberties" refers only to "acts of equal magnitude of gravity" to those specifically set forth in the statute. *Kennedy, 616 P.2d at 597;*

see also State in the *Interest of J.L.S., 610 P.2d 1294, 1296 (Utah 1980)* (reading the term "indecent liberties" as not "subsuming a mere offensive touching when the circumstances do not indicate conduct of sufficient gravity to be equated with the specific descriptions [of offensive touching] set forth in the statute."

[**17] In Reyes-Castro, analyzing the analogous statutory counterpart--covering sexual abuse of a child--to the statute before us--covering sexual abuse of an adult--we focused on the nonconsensual character of the offense of sexual abuse of a child. See *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379.* Noting that rape is a violent crime, see id. (citing *State v. Cude, 784 P.2d 1197, 1203 n.27 (Utah 1989)),* we addressed the relationship between lack of consent, an element of the crime of rape, and the risk of physical force, and stated that

because the crime [of rape] involves a non-consensual act upon another person, there is a substantial risk that physical force may be used in the course of committing the offense. It does not matter whether physical force is actually used. "Our scrutiny ends on a finding that the risk of violence is present."

Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379 (quoting *Rodriguez, 979 F.2d 138 at 141).* We therefore concluded, in light of both the terms of Utah child sexual abuse statute and "the legal determination that children are incapable of consent," there will always be "a substantial risk that physical [**18] force will be used to ensure the child's compliance." Id. We held that attempted sexual abuse of a child is a crime of violence under *18 U.S.C. § 16*(b). See id. n7

n7 If attempted sexual abuse of a child is a crime of violence, a fortiori, the completed offense of sexual abuse of a child is a crime of violence. Cf. *United States v. Coronado-Cervantes, 154 F.3d 1242, 1244-45 (10th Cir. 1998)* (holding that sexual abuse of a minor is a violent crime within the meaning of the

Sentencing Guidelines, and, noting that definitions of "crime of violence" in *18 U.S.C. § 16* and U.S.S.G. § 4B1.2 differ slightly, finding Reyes-Castro to be persuasive in its § 4B1.2 analysis); *United States v. Passi, 62 F.3d 1278, 1282 (10th Cir. 1995),* (following Reyes-Castro in characterizing sexual abuse of a minor as a violent crime under U.S.S.G. § 2A3.1).

In Reyes-Castro, reference to the principle that a child is legally incapable of [**19] consent was persuasive but not dispositive. n8 More significantly, the statute now before us explicitly requires that the prohibited conduct be committed "without the consent of the other." Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404. Therefore, the legal ability of adults to consent is irrelevant, as consent would remove conduct from the ambit of the statute. Although children's lesser physical stature and general vulnerability to violence and sexual exploitation by adults may increase the risk that physical force be exerted to ensure compliance in situations of child sexual abuse, this presumption by no means forecloses the potential that the risk of such force against adults is nevertheless substantial within the meaning of *18 U.S.C. § 16.* n9 In [*1120] Reyes-Castro, we focused on the relationship between lack of consent and the substantial risk of the application of physical force. We conclude today that such relationship is significant regardless of the age of the victim. Cf. *United States v. Phelps, 17 F.3d 1334, 1342 (10th Cir. 1994)* (concluding that kidnapping is a violent felony under *18 U.S.C. § 924*(e)(2)(B)(ii), and emphasizing relationship [**20] between lack of consent and risk of physical injury).

n8 Indeed, the analogy between the lack of consent element of § 76-5-404 and the legal impossibility of consent implicated by § 76-5-404.1(1) renders the two statutes even less distinguishable and the Reyes-Castro analysis even more directly on point.

n9 Rosquist suggests that to extend our reasoning in Reyes-Castro regarding sexual violence against children to sexual

violence against women would be to engage in impermissible sex stereotyping. This argument ignores the fact that both the GMVA and the Utah forcible sexual abuse statute apply, respectively, to gender-motivated violence and sexual abuse against men as well. More to the point, it is a bizarre view of equality indeed to suggest that some abstract principle of sex equality requires legislatures and courts to ignore the degree to which sexual violence is overwhelmingly and specifically directed against women. See, e.g., Patricia Tjaden & Nancy Thoennes, Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey 3, 12 (1998) (noting statistical predominance of partner violence and rape against women); Catharine A. MacKinnon, Reflections on Sex Equality Under Law, *100 Yale L.J. 1281, 1303-06 (1991)* (discussing uneasy relationship of sex equality doctrine to the reality of sexual assault against women).

[**21] Moreover, we note that the risk of physical force in a completed act or completed acts of forcible sexual abuse is arguably even greater than the risk at issue in Reyes-Castro, which involved attempted sexual abuse. See *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 378.*

We further reject the district court's assumption that either § 16 or the GMVA is restricted to a certain "type" of physical force. See *McCann, 998 F. Supp. at 1252* ("The actions alleged do not constitute an offense that by its nature involved a substantial risk of the type of physical force required to state a cause of action under GMVA."). Section 16 refers only to "physical force"; it does not qualify that reference by requiring physical force of a particular nature or severity. In fact, the imposition of nonconsensual sexual contact, whether brought about by brute force or, as alleged here, by trick and abuse of authority, might itself be considered a form of violence, capable of causing mental and emotional injury no less severe than the physical injury caused by a blow. See *Passi, 62 F.3d at 1282* (noting, in holding that

sexual abuse is a crime of violence under the Sentencing [**22] Guidelines, district court's statement that "psychological brutalization is inherent in an offense like this and incest and rape are in the same category as both being crimes of violence inherently whether or not raw force is used"). Even if one were to reject such a theory, however, and conclude that "violence" requires some greater degree of physical coercion or injury, the risk thereof certainly exists. The very act of nonconsensual sexual contact, which by its nature evinces a clear intention to disregard the victim's dignity and bodily autonomy, both demonstrates and creates a substantial risk of more serious physical intrusion or the application of force to ensure compliance.

Nor are we persuaded that Congress somehow imposed a more restrictive construction on the terms of *18 U.S.C. § 16* solely for purposes of the VAWA. The crimes of violence contemplated by the GMVA are more than merely murder, rape, and other extreme acts causing grave injury or death, but instead include, by incorporating the definition in *18 U.S.C. § 16,* a variety of crimes both inherently forceful and implicating a significant risk of force. As the legislative [**23] history of the VAWA noted, the conduct covered by the GMVA includes "crimes of violence, including felony rape, sexual assault, kidnapping, and any other felonies against the person . . . committed because of or on the basis of gender, and motivated, at least in part, by animus toward the victim's gender." S. Rep. No. 103-138, at 64 (1993) (emphasis added). In enacting the VAWA, Congress recognized the degree to which our nation's systems of law enforcement and adjudication have been complicit in perpetuating the epidemic of violence against women, in part by failing to recognize crimes of gender-motivated violence as serious crimes. See id. at 49 ("Study after study have proved that crimes disproportionately affecting women are often treated less seriously than crimes affecting men."). We will not compound that failing today by restricting, in contravention of the language of *18 U.S.C. § 16,* the definition of "violence" to only those forms of violence most traditionally feared by men--murder and serious bodily injury. To adopt such a restriction would be to exclude much of the "widespread incidence

of physical assault against women" from the coverage of [**24] the VAWA. Tjaden & Thoennes, [*1121] Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women at 12.

The civil remedy provision of the VAWA represents, in part, Congress's effort to remedy the ever-present threat of sexual assault and the continuing failure of our legal institutions to respond to that threat. In light of that effort, the plain language of *18 U.S.C. § 16,* and the precedential authority of Reyes-Castro, we conclude that nonconsensual physical sexual abuse implicates substantial risk of physical force, even when unaccompanied by rape, bodily injury, or extreme forms of coercion. To do otherwise would be to perpetrate, deliberately and in contravention of established precedent, the very judicial indifference to gender-based violence that Congress has endeavored to obviate.

IV

We recognize that there has been considerable litigation over whether the civil remedy provision of the VAWA is a legitimate exercise of Congressional power under either the Commerce Clause of Article I or Section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment. Compare, e.g., *Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 169 F.3d 820, 889 (4th Cir. 1999)* [**25] (en banc), petitions for cert. filed, (U.S. June 25, 1999) (No. 99-5), (U.S. June 30, 1999) (No. 99-29) (holding that enactment of § 13981 exceeded Congressional authority under either the Commerce Clause or Section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment) with *Ericson v. Syracuse University, 45 F. Supp. 2d 344, 348 (S.D.N.Y. 1999)* (holding § 13981 constitutional under the Commerce Clause).

Rosquist did not raise the constitutional issue below, however, and the district court did not rule on it. See *Rosquist, 998 F. Supp. at 1247.* "It is the general rule, of course, that a federal appellate court does not consider an issue not passed on below." *Singleton v. Wulff, 428 U.S. 106, 120, 49 L. Ed. 2d 826, 96 S. Ct. 2868 (1976).*

Although we may resolve issues for the first time on appeal if the facts of the individual case so warrant, see *id. at 121*, we do so "only in the most unusual circumstances." *Lyons v. Jefferson Bank & Trust, 994 F.2d 716, 721 (10th Cir. 1993)*. We have, for example, considered an issue of law where the district court implicitly addressed it, see *Trierweiler v. Croxton and Trench Holding Corp., 90 F.3d 1523, 1538 (10th Cir. 1996)*, [**26] and where the proper resolution of the issue was beyond a reasonable doubt and failure to reach it would cause injustice, see *Petrini v. Howard, 918 F.2d 1482, 1483 n.4 (10th Cir. 1990)*.

In this case, on the other hand, the district court explicitly refused to consider the issue, the issue itself is contentious, see, e.g., *Brzonkala, 169 F.3d at 905* (Motz, J., dissenting), and neither the government nor appellants have been afforded an opportunity to develop arguments and present evidence in defense of the statute's constitutionality, n10 see *Singelton, 428 U.S. at 120* (chiding court of appeals for reaching merits of constitutional issue where one party had never been heard on that issue). We therefore refuse to consider the constitutionality of the GMVA at this time. n11

n10 See Fed. R. App. P. 44 (requiring party challenging constitutionality of a federal statute, in an action in which the United States is not a party, to give written notice to the circuit clerk of the constitutional challenge in order to provide notice to the government). Our review of the docket in this case yields no indication that Rosquist has filed such Rule 44 notice.

[**27]

n11 Rosquist's suggestion that the constitutionality of the GMVA is jurisdictional and therefore a predicate issue is without merit. The provisions of the VAWA are presumed constitutional until invalidated, and therefore if plaintiffs' complaint states a claim under the GMVA, it clearly invokes federal question jurisdiction.

Nor are we persuaded that the possibility of constitutional challenges to the GMVA requires a narrow interpretation of the term "crime of violence" in *18 U.S.C. § 16,* under the rule of statutory construction requiring that we construe a statute "to avoid difficult constitutional issues" [*1122] in the absence of clear legislative intent. *Turner v. United States Parole Comm'n, 934 F.2d 254, 257 (10th Cir. 1991).* Section 16 exists independently of the VAWA, and we cannot disregard Congress's clear legislative intent to incorporate its definition of crimes of violence into the GMVA. It is simply not permissible for us to create, contrary to clear legislative intent, a special narrower construction of *18 U.S.C. § 16* for purposes [**28] only of the GMVA, in an effort to avoid a hypothetical constitutional challenge. Moreover, the relationship between the GMVA's incorporation of the definition of crimes of violence and Congress's authority to enact the GMVA under the Commerce Clause and the Fourteenth Amendment is exceptionally attenuated. Thus we are neither persuaded that constitutional concerns require insertion of a narrowing construction into the GMVA's incorporation of *18 U.S.C. § 16,* nor that such concerns are sufficiently intertwined with the issue of the construction of the GMVA and § 16 to require resolution today.

V

We conclude that the offense of nonconsensual sexual abuse of an adult necessarily implicates a significant risk of physical force being used to ensure compliance with the perpetrator's desires. Therefore, Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404 is indistinguishable, for purposes of a "crime of violence" analysis under *18 U.S.C. § 16,* from Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-404.1(1), and Reyes-Castro dictates that plaintiff's allegations state a cause of action under *42 U.S.C. § 13891.* The district court's dismissal of plaintiffs' complaint [**29] for failure to state a claim is REVERSED, as is the district court's decision to decline pendent jurisdiction over plaintiffs' state law claims, and the matter is remanded to the district court for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

MELANIE MCCANN, NOELE NELSON, LISA NIELSON,	)	No. 98-4049
Plaintiffs- Appellants,	)	
v.	)	
BRYON L. ROSQUIST, D.C., P.C., a Utah corporation; BRYON L. ROSQUIST, individually,	)	
Defendants- Appellees.	)	

ORDER

Filed October 4, 1999

Before **PORFILIO, LUCERO** and **COOK,** * Circuit Judges.

Appellees' petition for rehearing is denied.

The suggestion for rehearing en banc was transmitted to all of the judges of the court who are in regular active service as required by Fed. R.

*The Honorable H. Dale Cook, United states Senior District

Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma, sitting by designation.

App. 35. As no member of the panel and no judge in regular active service on the court requested that the court be polled, the suggestion is also denied.

Entered for the Court

PATRICK FISHER, Clerk of the Court

(Signed by the Clerk of the Court)

By: Deputy Clerk

MELANIE McCANN, NOELE NELSON, and LISA NIELSON, Plaintiffs,

vs. BRYON L. ROSQUIST, D.C., P.C., a Utah corporation, and

BRYON L. ROSQUIST, individually, Defendants.

Case No. 2:97-CV-0535-S

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF UTAH, CENTRAL DIVISION

998 F. Supp. 1246; 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 3685

March 19, 1998, Filed

DISPOSITION: [**1] Defendants' motion to dismiss granted.

CORE TERMS: crime of violence, gender, rape, violence, predicate crime, felony, violent, sexual abuse, categorical, burglary, civil rights, cause of action, forcible, statutory language, physical force, substantial risk, sexual assault, federally, assault, animus, crimes of violence, state statute, non-consensual, non-violent, uniformity, touching, amorous, sexual, sentencing guidelines, legislative history

COUNSEL: For Plaintiffs: Anthony B. Quinn, Esq., Susan J. Mueller, Esq., Larry S. Jenkins, Esq., Wood Crapo, Salt Lake City, Utah.

For Defendants: Brent O. Hatch, Esq., Heather A. McDougald, Esq., Johnson & Hatch, Salt Lake City, Utah.

JUDGES: DAVID SAM, CHIEF JUDGE, U.S. DISTRICT COURT.

OPINION BY: DAVID SAM

OPINION: [*1246] MEMORANDUM DECISION

INTRODUCTION

This matter is before the Court on Defendants' Motion to Dismiss. Counsel were present in court on January 7, 1998 for oral argument. Mary Anne Wood, Larry S. Jenkins and Susan J. Mueller appeared on behalf of Plaintiffs. Defendants were represented by Brent O. Hatch and Heather A. McDougald. The Court took the matter under advisement at the conclusion of oral argument and now issues this memorandum decision.

[*1247] FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiffs were Defendants' employees. Defendant Dr. Rosquist is a chiropractor. Plaintiffs have accused defendant Rosquist of inappropriate sexual remarks and touchings. They have alleged state law causes of action and have included one federal claim under the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA") upon which this Court's jurisdiction depends. Defendants have moved to dismiss the [**2] VAWA claim, and if the Court does so, the pendant state law claims for lack of jurisdiction. Essentially, the Defendants claim that the alleged acts do not constitute a "crime of violence" and that, as alleged, they were not "motivated by gender." Plaintiffs assert that the felony alleged, U.C.A. § 76-5-404, titled "Forcible sexual abuse", is a "crime of violence" by categorical definition and therefore any allegation sufficient to state a cause of action under section 76-5-404 is a crime of violence for VAWA purposes. Plaintiffs suggest that the Court must make this determination on the basis of how the alleged crime is defined by law without regard to the specific conduct of the defendants.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

For purposes of a motion to dismiss, the allegations of the complaint are presumed to be true and are construed in the light most favorable to the plaintiffs. *Yoder v. Honeywell, Inc., 104*

F.3d 1215, 1224 (10th Cir. 1997) (well-pleaded allegations are accepted as true and construed in a light most favorable to plaintiff) (quoting *Fuller v. Norton, 86 F.3d 1016, 1020 (10th Cir. 1996)); Miller v. Glanz, 948 F.2d 1562, 1565 (10th Cir. 1991)* (citing Curtis [**3] *Ambulance of Fla., Inc. v. Board of County Comm'rs, 811 F.2d 1371, 1374 (10th Cir.1987))* (allegations of complaint are presumed to be true). The complaint will only be dismissed if it appears that the plaintiffs cannot prove facts entitling them to relief. *Miller, 948 F.2d 1562 at 1565.*

INTRODUCTION TO VAWA/GMVA

In 1994, Congress passed the Civil Rights for Gender Motivated Violence Act (GMVA) as a subtitle to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The GMVA subtitle was intended as the civil rights arm of VAWA. n1 It provides a civil cause of action for relief from crimes of violence motivated by gender. *42 U.S.C.A. § 13981* (1995) (the act also allows attorneys fees pursuant to § 1988, and recovery of compensatory and punitive damages, and injunctive and declaratory relief). The Act was intended as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, existing state and federal remedies. S. Rep. No. 103-138, at 51 (1993) (not intended to supplant state tort law); S. Rep. No. 103-138, at 53 (not intended to undermine existing civil rights protections under title VII); see also *Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 132 F.3d 949, 971 (4th Cir. 1997)* [**4] (No. 96-1814, 96-2316) ("VAWA acts to supplement, rather than supplant, state criminal, civil, and family law controlling gender violence."); *Palazzolo v. Ruggiano, 993 F. Supp. 45, 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 2062,* at *4, *1998 WL 84552, at 2* (D.R.I., 1998) ("The cause of action created by VAWA supplements and does not supplant any claims that a plaintiff may have under applicable state law.").

n1 The short title of that portion of the act is the "Civil Rights Remedies for Gender Motivated Violence Act." P.L. 103-322, Title IV, subtitle C; 108 Stat. 1941.

A number of courts have discussed the constitutionality of the civil rights provisions of VAWA. The majority of courts that have dealt with the issue have concluded that VAWA is a constitutional exercise of the powers vested in Congress through the Commerce Clause--Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. *Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 132 F.3d 949 (4th Cir. 1997)* (but see dissent by Justice Luttig); *Mattison v. Click Corp. of America, Inc., 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 720, 1998 WL [**5] 32597* (E.D. Pa., 1998) (No. Civ.A. 97-CV-2736); *Crisonino v. New York City Housing Authority, 985 F. Supp. 385 (S.D.N.Y. 1997); Anisimov v. Lake, 982 F. Supp. 531 (N.D. Ill. 1997); Seaton v. Seaton, 971 F. Supp. 1188 (E.D. Tenn. 1997); Doe v. Doe, 929 F. Supp. 608 (D. Conn 1996).* The parties in the present case have not raised this issue. Furthermore, as a matter of judicial restraint the Court must first analyze the nonconstitutional challenges to the statute's applicability in the instant case. *Jean v. Nelson, 472 U.S. 846, 854, 86 L. Ed. 2d 664, 105 S. Ct. 2992 (1985).*

In order to state a cause of action under section 13981 (hereinafter "GMVA"), a party [*1248] must allege the commission of a "crime of violence motivated by gender." A defendant has committed a "crime of violence" within the meaning of GMVA if he/she satisfies the following requirements:

(1) The "act or series of acts [must] constitute a felony against the person"; and

(2) The "act or series of acts" must be a State or Federal offense within the meaning of title 18, section 16 of the United States Code which requires that the offense either:

(a) have "as an element the use, attempted use, or [**6] threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another," or

(b) "by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense."

42 U.S.C. § 13981(d)(2)(A); *18 U.S.C. § 16.* Furthermore, the "act or series of acts" are "motivated by gender" when they are "committed because of gender or on the basis of gender, and due, at least in part, to an animus based on the victim's gender . . . ." *42 U.S.C.A. § 13981*(d)(1).

Dr. Rosquist is accused of having committed acts which constitute forcible sexual abuse--a crime that is a felony under Utah law. U.C.A. § 76-5-404 (1995). Therefore, Plaintiffs have established the first prong of the GMVA requirements. Plaintiffs have conceded that the alleged offense does not include as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force and, therefore, does not satisfy subsection (a) of section 16. (Pls.' Mem. Opp. Mot. to Dis., at 3.) Accordingly, the issue before the Court is whether the Plaintiffs have stated a claim based on part (b) of the second prong of the GMVA requirements--that the "act or series [**7] of acts" constitute an offense that, by its nature involves a substantial risk that force may be used within the meaning of section 16(b).

Currently there are only a handful of cases that have applied VAWA. Many of those cases have not contained any relevant discussion of GMVA. Of those that have involved GMVA few have involved any helpful analysis of GMVA's definition of "crime of violence" in a context involving either the type of conduct or the type of predicate crime alleged in this case. In fact, this Court is aware of only eleven federal cases citing the Violence Against Women Act in the context of GMVA. Included in those

eleven cases are opinions by the Fourth and Eighth Circuits-- *Doe v. Hartz, 134 F.3d 1339 (8th Cir. 1998)* and *Brzonkala v. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 132 F.3d 949 (4th Cir. 1997)*. The remainder are district court opinions. Eight opinions have allowed a GMVA action to proceed. n2 The allegations in those cases have been rape, varying forms of criminal assault and battery, and violent physical and mental abuse. Three opinions dismissed the GMVA claims for failure to adequately allege a predicate crime or because the predicate [**8] crime was not a crime of violence. *Hartz, 134 F.3d 1339 (8th Cir. 1998)* (Sexual exploitation by a counselor or therapist--failure to allege predicate crime and predicate crime, as alleged, not a crime of violence); *Palazzolo, 993 F. Supp. 45, 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 2062, 1998 WL 84552* (Second degree sexual assault--of two part statute, plaintiff failed to allege elements of one part and the second part did not constitute a crime of violence); *Wilson v. Diocese of New York of the Episcopal Church, 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 2051, 1998 WL 82921* (S.D.N.Y., Feb. 26, 1998) (Third degree sexual assault--facts as alleged were insufficient to state a claim under any state statute that could be considered a crime of violence). The allegations in the three cases dismissing the GMVA claim involved nonconsensual touching and kissing--actions which sharply contrast with the allegations in the previously mentioned eight cases where the VAWA claims were allowed to proceed.

n2 *Brzonkala, 132 F.3d 949* (rape); *Mattison v. Click Corp. of America, Inc., 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 720, 1998 WL 748724* (E.D. PA, Jan 27, 1998) (sexual assault, battering); *Wesley v. Don Stein Buick, Inc., 985 F. Supp. 1288, 1997 WL 748724* (D. Kan., 1997) (aggravated assault); *Crisonino v. New York City Housing Authority, 985 F. Supp. 385 (S.D. N.Y. 1997)* (second degree assault); *Anisimov v. Lake, 982 F. Supp. 531 (N.D. Ill. 1997)* (rape); *Seaton v. Seaton, 971 F. Supp. 1188 (E.D. Tenn. 1997)* (assault and battery); *Newton v. Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consol., 958 F. Supp. 248 (W.D. N.C. 1997)* (assault); *Doe v. Doe, 929 F. Supp. 608 (D. Conn. 1996)* (assault and battery).

[**9] [*1249] With this backdrop of precedent the Court will proceed to determine the intended scope of GMVA.

SCOPE OF GMVA

Whether Plaintiffs allege a "crime of violence" is not readily determinable by looking only at the statutory language of GMVA or the definition of "crime of violence" in section 16. Hence, an appeal to the legislative history of GMVA and VAWA is warranted in order to enlighten our application of section 16 subsection (b) in the context of GMVA. See, *Barnhill v. Johnson, 503 U.S. 393, 401, 118 L. Ed. 2d 39, 112 S. Ct. 1386 (1992)* (appropriate to appeal to legislative history in cases of statutory ambiguity).

VAWA was first introduced in 1990 "in response to the escalating problem of violence against women." S. Rep. 103-138 at 37. To demonstrate the need for the legislation, the Senate reported the following:

Women in America suffer all the crimes that plague the Nation-muggings, car thefts, and burglaries to name a few. But there are also some crimes, including rape and family violence, that disproportionately burden women. . . . Both our resolve and our laws must change if women are to lead free and equal lives.

Id.

The report continues [**10] by stating statistics representing the nature of violence committed against women:

In 1991 at least 21,000 domestic crimes were reported to the police every week; at least 1.1 million reported assaults-including aggravated assaults, rapes, and murders-were committed against women in their homes that year. . . .

Every week, during 1991, more than 2,000 women were raped, and more than 90 were murdered. . . . Women are six times more likely than men to be the victim of a violent crime committed by an intimate; . . . .

Violence is the leading cause of injuries to women ages 15 to 44, ...

S. Rep. 103-138 at 37-38.

The Senate report discusses the problem of violence in terms such as rape, sexual assault, murder, and domestic violence. The report discusses battered women's shelters and situations where women are subject to hitting, attacking, and otherwise fearing for their safety. In the context of providing a civil rights remedy, the Senate stated that "the act provides, for the first time, a Federal civil rights remedy aimed at violent gender-based crimes. It is time for attacks motivated by gender bias [sic] to be considered as serious as crimes motivated by religious, [**11] racial, or political bias." Id. at 38. While placing special emphasis on domestic violence, VAWA was also intended to respond to needs outside the "family violence arena" where "victims of rape are often unable to find either justice or protection in the criminal justice system." Id. at 42. The report states that "for a cause of action to arise under title III, a plaintiff must prove that the crime of violence-whether an assault, a kidnaping, or a rape-was motivated by gender." Id. at 51. Finally, in the section by section analysis of the Act, the committee stated that "the conduct covered under [the civil rights] section includes crimes of violence, including felony rape, sexual assault, kidnaping, and any other felonies against the person (. . .) committed because of or on the basis of gender, and motivated, at least in part, by an animus toward the victim's gender." Id. at 64.

Based on the foregoing, it is clear that VAWA was intended to proscribe conduct that contributed to the national dilemma of violence perpetrated against women on account of their gender.

While there may be a variety of abuses suffered by women on account of their gender, the focus of VAWA [**12] and GMVA is to provide a remedy for victims of violent acts-i.e. rape, assault, kidnaping. Therefore, the Court will now determine whether the Plaintiffs' cause of action alleges the commission of an offense that, by its nature, is consistent with the types of offenses intended to be remedied by VAWA.

CATEGORICAL APPROACH AND GMVA

Determining what types of offenses constitute a "crime of violence" is not a novelty in the federal courts. On the contrary, federal courts have dealt with the term in one context or another for years. The term "crime of violence" is used in determining sentence [*1250] enhancement for Career Offenders (USSG §§ 4B1.1 to .2), Armed Career Criminals (USSG § 4B1.4; *18 U.S.C.A. § 924*(c)(3)), or Unlawfully Entering or Remaining in the U.S. having been deported after a conviction of an "aggravated felony." (USSG § 2L1.2.(b)(1)(A); *8 U.S.C.A. § 1101*(a)(43)) (these two statutes--2L1.2 and 1101(a)(43)--use *18 U.S.C.A. § 16* as a part of the definition, like the GMVA). The term is also used in the Bail Reform Act *(18 U.S.C.A. § 3156*(a)(4)(B)) (the definition is very similar to that contained in section 16 but it does not refer to section 16). The Sentencing Guidelines [**13] define "crime of violence" at section 4B1.2. That definition is almost identical to the definition of "violent felony" contained in *18 U.S.C.A. § 924*(e)(2)(B) (they differ in that the definition in the Sentencing Guidelines requires "burglary of a dwelling" in lieu of "burglary").

In determining whether a particular offense is a "crime of violence" within the meaning of section 16, courts have begun to apply the, so called, "categorical approach." *United States v. Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d 377 (10th Cir. 1993).* The roots of the "categorical approach" are found in the Supreme Court case of *Taylor v. United States, 495 U.S. 575, 109 L. Ed. 2d 607, 110 S. Ct. 2143 (1990).* In Taylor, the Court concluded that in order to determine whether a "burglary" was a "violent felony" within the

meaning of *18 U.S.C.A. § 924*(e), the court should use a uniform categorical approach rather than "depend on the definition adopted by the State of conviction." *Id. at 590.* The purpose being to create certain categories of crimes that would be evaluated the same regardless of the state of origin. *495 U.S. at 591-92.* The Court explained that a categorical approach required "the trial court to look [**14] only to the fact of conviction and the statutory definition of the prior offense." n3 *Id. at 602.*

n3 While the decision in Taylor has been used as authority for the general interpretation of "crime of violence," it should be noted that its holding is limited to defining burglary as a "violent felony" for purposes of sentence enhancement pursuant to *18 U.S.C. § 924*(e). However, to the extent that the holding supports a policy of federal uniformity, it is as applicable to GMVA as it is to other federal statutes.

However, the Taylor Court admitted the necessity of looking "beyond the mere fact of conviction in a narrow range of cases" in which the statutory definition of the crime encompassed both conduct that fit clearly within the federally defined category and conduct that fell outside the federally defined category. n4 Without the exception, as articulated in Taylor, the policy of federal uniformity would be undermined. One of two problems could occur: (1) conduct that clearly fit within the [**15] categorical definition would go unpunished if the state statute that proscribed the conduct was too broad to fit within the federally defined category, or (2) an overly broad statute could be labeled as a per se "crime of violence", thereby creating the risk that conduct falling outside the categorical definition would be improperly punished. *495 U.S. at 599-600.* Either result would create non-uniformity due to the fact that the same conduct that would go unpunished in one state could be punished in another state due to the particular statutory language of the given states. *United States v. Epps, 987 F. Supp. 22, 1997 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19819, 1997 WL 765775* (D.C., 1997) (recognizing a division in the district courts as to whether felon-in-possession is a crime of violence and

attributing the division to a feeling of being strictly constrained by the categorical approach). A number of courts have recognized and effectively applied the Taylor exception. See generally, *United States v. Winter, 22 F.3d 15 (1st Cir. 1994)* (when statutory language blankets both violent and [*1251] non-violent crimes a court may go beyond the legislatures definition of the crime); *United States v. Harris, 964 F.2d 1234 (1st Cir. 1992)* (looking [**16] at the statutory language alone will not be enough if the statute's language covers violent and non-violent crimes); *United States v. Fernandez, 940 F. Supp. 387 (D. Mass. 1996)* (when a statute covers both violent and non-violent conduct, courts may look beyond the statute).

n4 The example given in Taylor to illustrate the exception was a state statute that included both the entry of an automobile and the entry of a building as burglary. Under the Court's definition of the category of "generic burglary," a person would need to be charged with entry of a building to receive the enhancement. Entry of an automobile would not fit within the federally defined category of burglary and would not be the type of offense for which enhancement could be sought by the government. However, instead of determining that this particular state statute did not fit within the federally defined category of burglary, the Court ruled it appropriate to go beyond the statute and consider the actual conduct for which the conviction was obtained. Therefore, while all violations of a given statute may not constitute predicate offenses, if the statute's breadth overlaps into the categorical definition, the facts may be looked at to determine whether the alleged offense fits within the federal uniform category. *Taylor, 495 U.S. at 602.*

[**17] This Court concludes that, in the context of GMVA, a policy furthering federal uniformity can and should be applied. In fact, the reference in GMVA to section 16 indicates Congressional intent to set a uniform standard. All actions under GMVA must allege either a predicate crime or an offense that meets the

requirements of section 16. That standard helps assure the uniform application of GMVA nationwide. Also, in order to effectuate the policy of uniformity, determination of whether a crime of violence has been alleged should be limited to analyzing the statutory language whenever possible. If the language of a statute encompasses only clearly violent crimes, then the statute can be used as the predicate crime. n5 However, if the statutory language embodies both violent and non-violent crimes, the conduct alleged must be analyzed to determine whether it would qualify as a "crime of violence" within the meaning of section 16.

n5 In addition, the predicate crime would need to meet the other requirements of GMVA--i.e. constitute a felony against the person.

[**18] U.C.A. 76-5-404

In the present action, Plaintiffs have alleged a violation of U.C.A. § 76-5-404. n6 The statute is entitled "Forcible sexual abuse." If the label were to be regarded as persuasive, it is intuitive, as Plaintiffs have suggested, that any violation of the statute would constitute a violent crime. However, the technical definition or label of the predicate crime is not relevant to the determination of whether a given offense constitutes a "crime of violence." *Taylor, 495 U.S. 575, 590-92, 109 L. Ed. 2d 607, 110 S. Ct. 2143; U.S. v. Brunson, 907 F.2d 117 (10th Cir. 1990)* (state law definition not applicable in defining "crime of violence").

n6 U.C.A. § 76-5-404. Forcible sexual abuse.

(1) A person commits forcible sexual abuse if the victim is 14 years of age or older and, under circumstances not amounting to rape, object rape, sodomy, or attempted rape or sodomy, the actor touches the anus, buttocks, or any part of the genitals of another, or touches the breast of a female, or otherwise takes indecent liberties with another, or causes another to take

indecent liberties with the actor or another, with intent to cause substantial emotional or bodily pain to any person or with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, without the consent of the other, regardless or the sex of any participant.

(2) Forcible sexual abuse is a felony of the second degree.

[**19] In fact, the actual language of the statute encompasses a broad range of conduct, not all of which would constitute a "crime of violence" under section 16. While all of the conduct proscribed by the statute is unacceptable, not all of the conduct presents a "substantial risk that physical force against the person . . . may be used." *18 U.S.C.A. § 16.* Although the State of Utah may define any intrusive or offensive touching as a "forcible sexual abuse" and thereby a seemingly violent crime, the federal standard of "crime of violence", pursuant to GMVA is not so broad. *Palazzolo, 993 F. Supp. 45, 1998 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 2062, *5, 1998 WL 84552 at 4* (unwelcome contact is deplorable and should be punished but its opprobrious nature does not convert it into a "crime of violence").

Plaintiffs have argued that, irrespective of the particular conduct in this case, any violation of U.C.A. section 76-5-404 is a "crime of violence." (Pls.' Mem. Opp. Mot. to Dis., at 2.) In support of this conclusion they rely on the Tenth Circuit's holding in *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d 377 (10th Cir. 1993)* that sexual abuse of a child pursuant to U.C.A. 76-5-404.1(1) (1990) is a crime of violence under *18 U.S.C. § 16*(b). While the holding in Reyes-Castro [**20] may be influential, it does not control determination of the motion before the Court.

Plaintiffs have focused on language in Reyes-Castro that could be read to suggest that any non-consensual act upon another person constitutes a "crime of violence." *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379.* Plaintiffs would have the Court read Reyes-Castro as

expanding the categories of crimes of violence to all felonies involving a non-consensual [*1252] act upon another person. It is not clear that the Tenth Circuit's holding was so broad. Furthermore, such a holding has been expressly rejected by at least one other circuit. *U.S. v. Shannon, 110 F.3d 382, 385 (7th Cir. 1997)* ("An inference of violence from mere unconsented-to physical contact, . . . , would not wash in this circuit.").

Despite plaintiffs' broader urging, the court finds that the Tenth Circuit held in Reyes-Castro only that sexual abuse of a child is a crime of violence. Courts have consistently held that sexual crimes involving children as victims meet the definition of "crimes of violence." *U.S. v. Shannon, 110 F.3d 382 (7th Cir. 1997)* (sexual intercourse with a 13 year old girl resulting in her impregnation is a crime of [**21] violence within the meaning of the sentencing guidelines); *U.S. v. Bauer, 990 F.2d 373 (8th Cir. 1993)* (statutory rape is a crime of violence); *U.S. v. Rodriguez, 979 F.2d 138 (8th Cir. 1992)* (lascivious acts with minors is a "crime of violence"). In addition, and presumably for the purpose of analogy, the court concluded that 'rape would be a crime of violence under *18 U.S.C. § 16*(b)." *Reyes-Castro, 13 F.3d at 379.* The Tenth Circuit did not hold that the statute in question--U.C.A. § 76-5-404--was a "crime of violence." Notably, the statute in question does not involve crimes against children nor does it necessarily involve physical impositions as grave in nature as those associated with rape.

Having made that significant distinction, this Court has been unable to find a single case finding that a predicate statute similar to the one at issue constitutes a per se "crime of violence." Furthermore, having reviewed over 100 cases that discuss the term "crime of violence" in a variety of contexts, the Court has not been able to identify a single case that involved conduct similar in nature to the conduct alleged in this case.

Plaintiffs have alleged the commission of numerous [**22] acts by defendant Rosquist on the Plaintiffs. Acts that fall within

the purview of the alleged predicate crime include defendant Rosquist's touching of Plaintiffs' bodies--clothed and unclothed--, specifically breasts and buttocks, without their consent; and taking indecent liberties with Plaintiffs, including unzipping and removing plaintiff McCann's wet suit near the breast area, pulling out the elastic waist band on plaintiff McCann's stretch pants to look down her pants, and rubbing his genital area against the Plaintiffs' bodies. (Compl. PP 12-93.) While the conduct alleged is offensive and repulsive, and according to U.C.A. § 76-5-404, a felony, it is not of the violent nature required to state a cause of action under GMVA. The actions alleged do not constitute an offense that by its nature involved a substantial risk of the type of physical force required to state a cause of action under GMVA. Likewise, the time, place, manner, and other circumstances alleged are not such that the situation could escalate into one where there would be a substantial risk that physical force would be used. All of the acts alleged appear to have occurred at work or at social activities under circumstances [**23] that would have greatly discouraged any escalation of contact to the type of violent conduct required within the meaning of section 16(b) and GMVA.

Based on the foregoing, the Court finds that even upon accepting all of the facts alleged by Plaintiffs as true and construing them in a light most favorable to the Plaintiffs, they are insufficient to sustain a finding that Rosquist's conduct constituted a "crime of violence" within the meaning of title 42 section 13981. Consequently, Plaintiffs have failed to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

Having found that Plaintiffs have failed to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, it is unnecessary for the Court to address Defendants' contention that Plaintiffs have failed to allege gender motivation as required by GMVA. Nevertheless, Defendants' attempt to characterize the alleged conduct as "amorous" as opposed to being based on "animus" deserves comment. (Defs.' Mem. Supp. Mot. to Dis., at 6.) The notion that non-consensual sexually oriented conduct is actually amorous and

therefore not invidiously discriminatory toward the victimized class is clearly wrong. The legislative history makes clear that the "animus" required [**24] is something akin to a "gender bias." S. Rep. No. 103-138, at 52. In fact, the perception that a man is somehow less culpable in taking inappropriate liberties with members of [*1253] the female gender if his motivations are amorous, seems to be just the type of "animus" that is a focus of concern in gender discrimination. Regardless of the amorous intentions of the perpetrator, non-consensual expressions of affection that rise to the nature of those alleged in this action are laden with disrespect for women. Were the court faced with resolution of this question in this matter, it would be disposed to find that plaintiffs have sufficiently alleged that the conduct of defendant Rosquist was motivated by gender within the meaning of GMVA.

Accordingly, Defendants' motion to dismiss is granted. Having dismissed the federal cause of action for failure to state a claim, the Court declines to exercise pendant jurisdiction over the remaining state causes of action. n7

n7 In *United Mine Workers v. Gibbs, 383 U.S. 715, 726, 16 L. Ed. 2d 218, 86 S. Ct. 1130 (1966)* the Court held that:

needless matter of state law should be avoided both as a matter of comity and to promote justice between the parties, by procuring for them a surer-footed reading of applicable law. Certainly, if the federal claims are dismissed before trial, even though not insubstantial in a jurisdictional sense, the state claims should be dismissed as well.

[**25] The Court directs the clerk to enter judgment accordingly.

SO ORDERED.

DATED this 18th day of March, 1998.

BY THE COURT:

DAVID SAM

CHIEF JUDGE

U.S. DISTRICT COURT

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

U.S. Const. art. I, 8

The Congress shall have the Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes....

U.S. Const. Amendment X.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

42 U.S.C. 13981. Civil rights

(a) Purpose. Pursuant to the affirmative power of Congress to enact this subtitle under section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, as well as under section 8 of Article I of the Constitution, it is the purpose of this subtitle to protect the civil rights of victims of gender motivated violence and to promote public safety, health, and activities affecting interstate commerce by establishing a Federal civil rights cause of action for victims of crimes of violence motivated by gender.

(b) Right to be free from crimes of violence. All persons within the United States shall have the right to be free from crimes of

violence motivated by gender (as defined in subsection (d)).

(c) Cause of action. A person (including a person who acts under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage of any State) who commits a crime of violence motivated by gender and thus deprives another of the right declared in subsection (b) shall be liable to the party injured, in an action for the recovery of compensatory and punitive damages, injunctive and declaratory relief, and such other relief as a court may deem appropriate.

(d) Definitions. For purposes of this section--

(1) the term "crime of violence motivated by gender" means a crime of violence committed because of gender or on the basis of gender, and due, at least in part, to an animus based on the victim's gender; and

(2) the term "crime of violence" means--

(A) an act or series of acts that would constitute a felony against the person or that would constitute a felony against property if the conduct presents a serious risk of physical injury to another, and that would come within the meaning of State or Federal offenses described in section 16 of title 18, United States Code, whether or not those acts have actually resulted in criminal charges, prosecution, or conviction and whether or not those acts were committed in the special maritime, territorial, or prison jurisdiction of the United States; and

(B) includes an act or series of acts that would constitute a felony described in subparagraph (A) but for the relationship between the person who takes such action and the individual against whom such action is taken.

(e) Limitations and procedures.

(1) Limitation. Nothing in this section entitles a person to a cause of action under subsection (c) for random acts of violence unrelated to gender or for acts that cannot be demonstrated, by a preponderance of the evidence, to be motivated by gender (within the meaning of subsection (d)).

(2) No prior criminal action. Nothing in this section requires a prior criminal complaint, prosecution, or conviction to establish the elements of a cause of action under subsection (c).

(3) Concurrent jurisdiction. The Federal and State courts shall have concurrent jurisdiction over actions brought pursuant to this subtitle.

(4) Supplemental jurisdiction. Neither section 1367 of title 28, United States Code, nor subsection (c) of this section shall be construed, by reason of a claim arising under such subsection, to confer on the courts of the United States jurisdiction over any State law claim seeking the establishment of a divorce, alimony, equitable distribution of marital property, or child custody decree.

18 U.S.C. 16. Crime of violence defined

The term "crime of violence" means--

(a) an offense that has as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another, or

(b) any other offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense.

Utah Code Annotated § 76-5-404. Forcible sexual abuse

(1) A person commits forcible sexual abuse if the victim is 14 years of age or older and, under circumstances not amounting to rape, object rape, sodomy, or attempted rape or sodomy, the actor touches the anus, buttocks, or any part of the genitals of another, or touches the breast of a female, or otherwise takes indecent liberties with another, or causes another to take indecent liberties with the actor or another, with intent to cause substantial emotional or bodily pain to any person or with the intent to arouse

or gratify the sexual desire of any person, without the consent of the other, regardless of the sex of any participant.